

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the South Somerset Local Plan Review

Interim SA Report

South Somerset District Council

June 2019

Quality information

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1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM is commissioned to lead on Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in support of South Somerset District Council's early review of the Local Plan. SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of a Draft Plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating adverse effects and maximising the positives. SA of Local Plans is a legal requirement.

SA Explained

- 1.2 It is a requirement that SA is undertaken in-line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which transposed into national law EU Directive 2001/42/EC on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).¹
- 1.3 In-line with the Regulations, a report (known as the SA Report) must be published for consultation alongside the Draft Plan that essentially 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'.² The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 1.4 More specifically, the SA Report must answer the following three questions:
1. What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?
 - Including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'.
 2. What are the SA findings at this stage?
 - i.e. in relation to the Draft Plan.
 3. What happens next?
 - What steps will be taken to finalise (and monitor) the plan?

This SA Report

- 1.5 This SA Report³ is published alongside the South Somerset Local Plan Review Preferred Options Document, under Regulation 18 of the Local Planning Regulations. The legally required SA Report will be published subsequently, alongside the final draft ('Proposed Submission/ Publication') version of the Local Plan, under Regulation 19 of the Local Planning Regulations.
- 1.6 Each of the three SA questions is answered in turn below, with a 'part' of the report dedicated to each.
- 1.7 Before answering Question 1, two initial questions are answered in order to further 'set the scene': i) What is the plan trying to achieve?; and ii) What is the scope of the SA?

¹ The SA process incorporates the SEA process. Indeed, SA and SEA are one and the same process, differing only in terms of substantive focus. SA has an equal focus on all three 'pillars' of sustainable development (environment, social and economic).

² Regulation 12(2) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

³ See **Appendix I** for further explanation of the regulatory basis for answering certain questions within the SA Report; and a 'checklist' explaining more precisely the regulatory basis for presenting certain information.

2. What is the Plan seeking to achieve?

- 2.1 The South Somerset Local Plan Review (LPR) will provide a refreshed policy framework that will guide and shape development in the District up to 2036. The Local Plan Review will replace the current South Somerset Local Plan (2006-2028), adopted in March 2015.
- 2.2 In his report to the Council, the independent Inspector who carried out the Examination into the Local Plan (2006 – 2028) made it clear that an early review of the policies relating to housing and employment provision in Wincanton would be required. This early review was to be completed within three years of the date of adoption, which would be no later than March 2018.
- 2.3 The Council previously stated that it will produce a Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) to provide the additional detail on proposals for the 'Sustainable Urban Extensions' in Yeovil and 'Directions of Growth' in Market Towns.
- 2.4 Because the Site Allocations DPD and early review of policies relating to Wincanton require a refresh of much of the underlying evidence base, the Council has agreed that it would be more efficient to combine the Site Allocations DPD with the review of the Wincanton policies, and effectively review the current Local Plan in its entirety.
- 2.5 The LPR rolls the plan period forward covering the timeframe 2016-2036, and considers the settlement strategy, housing and economic growth requirements, site allocations, and a series of topic-based policies that will be used to assess planning applications. Adoption is anticipated to be at the end of 2020.

Plan vision and objectives

- 2.6 The Vision to 2036 is as follows:

"South Somerset will be a thriving, attractive, healthy and socially inclusive place to live, work, study and visit. A place where businesses flourish and become more productive, communities are safe, vibrant and healthy, where residents enjoy good housing and cultural, leisure and sporting activities. It will have sustainable, low carbon towns with enhanced infrastructure of all types and improved public transport links. The District will have high quality distinctive, historic, urban and rural environments, with vital and vibrant town centres with regeneration plans in Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton successfully accomplished. It will have a prosperous and productive economy building on existing strengths and provide a choice of high quality housing options for all. Inequality between urban and rural areas will be reduced with improved digital accessibility. The role of South Somerset as a gateway to the South West will be enhanced".

- 2.7 The objectives of the Local Plan Review are derived from the Council Plan and the NPPF. The Strategic Objectives form the overall strategic approach by which the Vision for South Somerset will be achieved and are as follows:
 - 1. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes: Promote sufficient high quality housing in sustainable locations, of a size, density and tenure required to meet the needs of the residents of South Somerset, delivered through a sustainable settlement strategy and hierarchy.
 - 2. Building a strong, competitive economy: To establish an environment where there is sustainable economic growth in South Somerset, where all new and existing businesses both urban and rural can invest, where they are supported, can flourish, be competitive and become more productive.
 - 3. Ensuring the vitality of town centres: Support and sustain a hierarchy of vital and vibrant town centres across the District to be the focus for commercial, retail and leisure uses and to deliver planned regeneration proposals in Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton town centres.
 - 4. Promoting healthy and safe communities: Create a health enhancing, socially interactive, safe environment through the promotion of walking, cycling and non-car based transport and design. This will enable access to leisure opportunities, sports facilities, local shops, health care facilities, meeting places, open spaces, green infrastructure and other local

services with a clear legible and integrated approach to locating housing, economic uses, services and facilities.

5. Promoting sustainable transport: Working with partners to address the impact of development on transport networks and maximising the opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure such as the planned improvements to the A303 Sparkford to Ilchester and the A358 Taunton to Southfields. Supporting the use of non-carbon fuel cars and commercial vehicles.
6. Supporting high quality communications: In both rural and urban areas, to support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections.
7. Making effective use of land: Promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions.
8. Achieving well designed places: Support the creation of high quality buildings and places responding to local distinctive character and setting through the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials.
9. Meeting the challenge of climate change and flooding: Promote the reuse of resources, the principles of sustainable construction and the use of new technologies to combat and adapt to climate change to minimise impact of all new development on the environment. Help to achieve the national aim of reducing the carbon budget by 57% below 1990 levels by 2030⁴.
10. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment: Protection and enhancement of our distinctive natural environment, valued landscapes and biodiversity, retaining the distinctiveness of settlements and taking account of known environmental constraints, including flood risk, and noise and air pollution in distributing growth.
11. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment: To sustain and enhance the significance of the District's distinctive heritage assets, recognising the character they bring to places, and the wider social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits the conservation of the historic environment can bring.

⁴ Current Government Policy is to reduce the carbon budget to 57% below 1990 levels by 2030. This is based on update advice from the Climate Change Committee in June 2016.

3. What is the scope of the SA?

Introduction

- 3.1 The aim here is to introduce the reader to the scope of the SA, i.e. the sustainability issues/objectives that should be a focus of (and provide a broad methodological framework for) SA.
- 3.2 Further information on the scope of the SA - i.e. a more detailed review of sustainability issues/objectives as highlighted through a review of the sustainability 'context' and 'baseline' - is presented in **Appendix II**.

Consultation on the scope

- 3.3 The Regulations require that *"When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the Environmental Report [i.e. the SA scope], the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies"*. In England, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.⁵ A Scoping Report was sent to the statutory consultees for comment in December 2016. The responses received were taken into account and amendments made to the baseline information and draft SA Objectives where necessary. A Final Scoping Report was produced in March 2017.

SA Objectives

- 3.4 **Table 3.1** presents the sustainability objectives - grouped under ten topic headings - established through SA scoping, i.e. in light of context/baseline review, identified key issues and responses from statutory consultees.
- 3.5 Taken together, the sustainability topics and draft objectives presented in **Table 3.1** provide a methodological 'framework' for appraisal.

Table 3.1: SA Objectives

SA Objectives	Appraisal questions
Communities (including Housing)	
To meet the housing needs of all residents and different communities.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide sufficient housing to meet the identified needs of all Communities within South Somerset?
To maintain and enhance community and settlement identities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an appropriate mix of types of housing to meet the identified needs of all communities within South Somerset?
To improve accessibility to services and facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an opportunity to help meet housing needs arising from outside the Plan area?
<i>Relevant SEA Topics:</i> <i>Population and Human Health</i>	
<i>Relevant NPPF Paragraphs: 47-78</i>	
Economy and Employment	
To support the economy and ensure that there are suitable opportunities for employment.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide sufficient high quality employment land to meet the identified needs of all communities within South Somerset?
<i>Relevant SEA Topics:</i> <i>Population & Human Health</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate the provision of the right type of employment land in the right place? Safeguard existing employment land in South Somerset?

⁵ In accordance with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because 'by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programmes.'

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
18-22, 42 & 43

- Support and enhance the vitality and viability of Town Centres, in particular Dunstable Town Centre?
- Regenerate or provide employment opportunities in areas that are currently experiencing high rates of unemployment or deprivation?
- Enhance the provision of education and training facilities?
- Support the visitor economy?
- Facilitate working from home, remote working and home-based businesses?

Health and Equalities

To improve the health and wellbeing of communities and reduce inequalities

Relevant SEA Topics:
Population and Health

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
69-78

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Promote accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities for all age groups?
- Encourage healthy lifestyles and reduce health inequalities?
- Enhance multifunctional green infrastructure networks in South Somerset and in the surrounding areas?
- Provide and enhance the provision of community access to open space, green infrastructure and recreational areas?
- Provide development in the most deprived areas and stimulate regeneration?
- Provide equality of opportunity for all protected groups?

Transport and Movement

To maintain and improve the existing highway network, encourage a demonstrable modal shift and reduce the need to travel.

Relevant SEA Topics:
Population and Human Health

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
29-41

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Reduce the need to travel through sustainable patterns of land use and development?
- Improve access to and quality of sustainable transport modes for all communities, to allow sustainable movement not only within South Somerset but into the surrounding areas?
- Enable transport infrastructure improvements?
- Facilitate working from home and remote working?
- Provide improvements to and/or reduced congestion on the existing highway network?
- Support or enhance the local ambitions for transport?
- Does the option offer an opportunity to support the delivery of proposed transport infrastructure, such as the East West Rail Link?

Energy and Climate Change

To promote climate change mitigation and support resilience to the potential effects of climate change.

Relevant SEA Topics:
Climatic Factors

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
93-104

Will the option/proposal:

- Reduce energy consumption and increase efficiency?
- Promote the use of energy from low carbon sources?
- Ensure that new development is resilient to the effects of climate change?
- Improve green infrastructure networks in the Plan area (and beyond) to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change?

Water Resources, Quality and Flooding

To minimise the demand for water and maintain or improve water quality.

Relevant SEA Topics:
Water

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
99-125

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Minimise water consumption?
- Protect and improve the area's chemical and biological water quality?
- Protect surface and groundwater resources?

To reduce the risk of flooding from all sources.

Relevant SEA Topics:
Water

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
99-125

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Direct development away from areas at highest risk of flooding as per the sequential test, taking into account the likely effects of climate change?
- Make development safe where it is necessary within an area of flood risk and without increasing flood risk elsewhere?
- Sustainably manage water run-off, ensuring that the risk of flooding is not increased and where possible reduced?
- Improve green infrastructure networks in South Somerset (and beyond) to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change?
- Safeguard land to manage flood risk?

Soil and Land

To protect and conserve soil.

Relevant SEA Topics:
Soil.

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
109-125

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Promote the use of previously developed land?
- Avoid the use of land classified as best and most versatile agricultural land?

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Relevant SEA Topics:
Biodiversity, fauna and flora

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
109-125

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Avoid, or if not minimise impacts on biodiversity, including designated sites, and provide net gains where possible?
- Protect and enhance ecological networks, including those that cross administrative boundaries?
- Protect the important geodiversity of South Somerset?

Landscape and Townscape

Landscape and Townscape.

Relevant SEA Topics:
Landscape

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
109-125

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Protect and where possible enhance nationally and locally designated landscapes and their setting?
- Protect and where possible enhance the overall rural landscape character of South Somerset?
- Regenerate previously developed land or restore derelict sites such as disused market gardens, former quarries or pits?

Historic Environment

To protect and enhance the significance of the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings.

Relevant SEA Topics:
Cultural Heritage

Relevant NPPF Paragraphs:
6-10, 126-141

Will the option/proposal help to:

- Protect and where possible, enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets and their setting?
- Protect and where possible, enhance conservation areas?
- Protect and where possible, enhance the wider historic environment?
- Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?

Part 1: What has plan-making/
SA involved up to this point?

4. Introduction (to Part 1)

- 4.1 Local plan-making has been underway since 2015, with a wide range of evidence produced to inform the development of the Local Plan. Table 4.1 sets out the key Local Plan and SA Documents published along with dates for consultation. The Local Plan documents and the evidence base (including the SA Reports) can be viewed and downloaded on the Council's website.⁶

Table 4.1: Local Plan and SA stages

Local Plan Documents & Consultation	SA Documents & Consultation
	SA Scoping Report Sent to statutory consultees for consultation in December 2016 and finalised in March 2017
Issues and Options Consultation Document (Reg 18) Public consultation from October 2017 and January 2018	Initial SA Report Public consultation from October 2017 and January 2018
Preferred Options Consultation (Reg 18) Public consultation from June to September 2019	This Interim SA Report and NTS Public consultation from June to September 2019

- 4.2 Rather than recap the entire 'story' in detail, the intention here is to explain the work undertaken in 2018/ 19, which led to the development of the Preferred Options document that is currently the focus of appraisal (see Part 2, below) and currently published under Local Planning Regulation 18. Specifically, in-line with regulatory requirements (Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations), there is a need to explain how work was undertaken to develop and then appraise reasonable alternatives, and how the Council then took into account appraisal findings when finalising the draft plan for publication.
- 4.3 This part of the report presents information regarding the consideration of reasonable alternatives. This information is important given regulatory requirements.⁷

What is the key issue for the plan?

- 4.4 Whilst the plan objectives (see chapter 1, above) are numerous and cover a range of issues, it is clear that an overarching objective⁸ relates to the identification of land to meet housing needs. Determining an approach to housing growth is the primary means by which the plan seeks to achieve wide ranging objectives. It is the matter at the heart of the plan. Hence it is considered reasonable⁹ that alternatives appraisal should focus on this matter.
- 4.5 Whilst the plan is set to establish policy to address a range of other specific issues, it was recognised as reasonable and proportionate to develop policy without formal alternatives appraisal as they are not likely to result in significant effects.

⁶ <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/your-council/your-council-plan-and-strategies/planning-policy/local-plan-review-2016-2036/>

⁷ There is a requirement for the SA Report to present an appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' and 'an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with'. Whilst this report is not the SA Report, it is appropriate to present this information nonetheless for the benefit of stakeholders.

⁸ In line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004), a decision on what 'reasonably' should be the focus of alternatives appraisal should be made in-light of the plan objectives. In the case of the South Somerset Local Plan Review, it is suggested that plan objective 1, which relate to meeting objectively assessed housing needs, is somewhat overarching.

⁹ Recent case-law (most notably Friends of the Earth Vs. Welsh Ministers, 2015) has established that planning authorities may apply discretion and planning judgement when determining what should reasonably be the focus of alternatives appraisal, recognising the need to apply a proportionate approach and ensure an SA process / report that is focused and accessible.

Structure of this part of the report

4.6 This part of the report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 5** - explains the context and work undertaken to develop reasonable alternatives;
- **Chapter 6** - explains the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with;
- **Chapter 7** - presents an appraisal of the reasonable alternatives; and
- **Chapter 8** - explains reasons for selecting the preferred option.

5. Developing the Reasonable Alternatives

Introduction

5.1 This chapter explains the work undertaken in 2018/ 19 to develop reasonable alternatives. This chapter:

- explains the context and background to alternatives development; and then
- explains the process followed in 2018 and 2019 in order to establish reasonable alternatives.

Context and background

Issues and Options 2017 (Regulation 18)

Identifying options in 2017

- 5.2 The Issues and Options document set out a number of key District-wide challenges in preparing the LPR and planning positively for growth in homes, jobs and associated infrastructure. Issues were identified through various mechanisms, for example, changes in national policy and legislation, evidence base documents and internal monitoring. They combined to highlight the key spatial planning issues facing South Somerset at the time.
- 5.3 Options for addressing identified key issues were presented in each section of the Issues and Options document. The document sets out a number of questions, accompanying the options, in order to focus responses on the key issues going forward.
- 5.4 Based on the updated evidence - including the joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2016) - the Council set out the key issues and proposes some alternative options for addressing spatial planning issues in the District.
- 5.5 Four options for the spatial distribution of housing were identified and these were:
- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Option A: | Continue with the existing Local Plan spatial distribution of growth: Yeovil 47%, Market Towns 32%, Rural Centres 7% and Rural Settlements 14% |
| Option B: | Have a more dispersed strategy based upon where the market is delivering. |
| Option C: | Introduce an additional tier of 'Village' settlements where development could be allocated. |
| Option D: | Allocate a Garden Town or Village. |

5.6 Three options for the spatial distribution of employment were identified and these were:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| Option 1: | Continue with the current Local Plan approach (which sees land distributed in the following way - 33.5% in Yeovil, 59% in Market Towns - 39% in Primary Market Towns & 20% in Local Market Towns, 7.5% in Rural Centres and no employment figure identified for Rural Settlements). |
| Option 2: | Continue with the current Local Plan approach (which sees land distributed in the following way - 33.5% in Yeovil, 59% in Market Towns - 39% in Primary Market Towns & 20% in Local Market Towns, 7.5% in Rural Centres and no employment figure identified for Rural Settlements). |
| Option 3: | Allocate sites along the A303. |

Appraisal of the options in 2017

5.7 The options identified above were appraised through the SA process and the findings presented in an Interim SA Report that was published alongside the Issues and Options document for public consultation in October 2017.

- 5.8 The appraisal found that continuing with the current Local Plan approach under Option A and Option 1 would have positive effects for the higher tier settlements and their communities through the delivery of housing, employment and associated infrastructure. In particular, they will help Yeovil to maintain its status as a Strategically Significant Market Town being a focus of the District for housing, employment and services. Growth would be directed to the population centres where there is the greatest need for housing and employment. However, the delivery of these options may also exacerbate existing infrastructure and congestion issues within Yeovil and some of the other main centres as residents are commuting from rural areas to access employment and services. There is also potential to intensify previous under delivery of housing and employment through Options 1 and A, which would have an adverse effect on the growth of the centres, and the wider economy.
- 5.9 Directing growth in more rural locations where the market is delivering could play a significant role in alleviating the pressure on Yeovil and some of the other main centres. Options B, C and 2 are more likely to have positive accessibility effects on Rural Settlements and their communities compared to Options A and 1. The delivery of Option B alongside Option 2, would have positive effects in terms of improving access to employment for rural communities, and reducing out-commuting to larger settlements. Option C provides the Council with an opportunity to have a more coordinated approach to the delivery of housing and associated infrastructure within the rural area.
- 5.10 Option 3 delivers development along the A303, which provides a strong 'east-west' axis thorough the District, facilitating economic connectivity as well as easy access to markets, labour, goods and materials. This option is likely to continue current trends of private vehicle use as accessibility to public transport is poor along the A303 corridor. The delivery of a new garden Town under Option D alongside Option 3 could help to address this problem to some extent through improvements to the accessibility of public transport.
- 5.11 Option D would be likely to have significant positive effects on social and economic objectives through providing a scale of growth that would deliver significant new community facilities to benefit residents and the wider District. It is assumed that any new Garden Town or Village would be located with good access to strategic transport network, such as in close proximity to the A303.
- 5.12 For the majority of the natural environment related SA topics, the nature and significance of effects will be dependent on the precise location and scale of options along with mitigation measures provided. The localised impact of the options depends on where growth is being directed. Options A and 1 have a greater potential for negative effects on the natural environment within and surrounding the higher tier settlements. Options B, C and 2 are more likely to have a negative effect on the natural environment in rural areas and more widely across the District. Option 3 is more likely to affect the natural environment around settlements along the A303 corridor. Option D will have a reduced effect on the natural environment across the District but a negative effect of greater significance locally. However, this is obviously dependent on its location.
- 5.13 An appraisal of site options was also carried out at this time and the detailed findings of the SA at this stage is presented in the Interim SA Report (2017) available for viewing and download on the Council's website.¹⁰

¹⁰ <https://www.southsomerset.gov.uk/your-council/your-council-plan-and-strategies/planning-policy/local-plan-review-2016-2036/>

Developing reasonable alternatives in 2018/19

- 5.14 Since the Issues and Options consultation in 2017, the evidence base and further technical work has progressed. It was therefore recognised that further work was needed to refine understanding of spatial strategy alternatives (i.e. continue the process of refinement discussed above)¹¹ and ultimately arrive at reasonable alternatives for appraisal/ consultation. The task involved giving consideration to ‘top-down’ factors and ‘bottom-up’ factors, before finally bringing the evidence together and establishing reasonable alternative spatial strategies.

‘Top-down’ considerations

Quantum

- 5.15 The current Local Plan has an annual housing target of 725 dwellings per year. Additional evidence based work has been undertaken since this target was adopted in 2015; a joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was carried for Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Councils.
- 5.16 The joint SHMA was published in 2016 and tested a number of scenarios to derive the objectively assessed need (OAN) for South Somerset. The SHMA identifies an OAN of 660 dwellings per annum (including bedspaces for older people) to be taken forward for SSDC, resulting in a housing requirement of 13,200 new dwellings over the period 2014-2034.
- 5.17 In July 2018, the Government published guidance on a new Standardised Methodology for Assessing Housing Need. Based on this standard method and the 2014-based household projections, the housing need figure for SSDC is calculated as 716 (rounded) dwellings per annum, or 14,322 (rounded) dwellings over a 20 year plan period.

Settlement hierarchy

- 5.18 The South Somerset Role and Function Study (2009) identified a hierarchy of 14 main settlements and this was taken forward in the adopted Local Plan.

Table 5.1 Settlement Hierarchy in adopted Local Plan 2006-2028

Strategically Significant Town
Yeovil
Primary Market Towns
Chard
Crewkerne
Ilminster
Wincanton
Local Market Towns
Ansford and Castle Cary
Langport and Huish Episcopi
Somerton
Rural Centres
Bruton
Ilchester
Martock and Bower Hinton
Milborne Port
South Petherton

¹¹ National Planning Practice Guidance is clear that understanding of alternatives should be ‘refined’ over time through the SA process.

Stoke sub Hamdon

Rural Settlements

Settlements that meet the criteria for Policy SS2

- 5.19 The Issues and Options consultation document identified that development in Rural Settlements has made a significant contribution to housing delivery in South Somerset and more homes have been delivered in these locations than the settlement strategy envisaged. Larger Rural Settlements appear to be the focus for most development but there are also significant commitments in other smaller locations.
- 5.20 The I&O document identified an option to introduce a 'Villages' category of settlement; where a specific level of growth could be focused on more sustainable settlements and reduce the pressure on the smaller settlements which meet the criteria for adopted Local Plan Policy SS2. This option along with others was considered through the SA process with the findings presented in the Interim SA Report (2017).
- 5.21 The Council carried out an assessment of Rural Settlements in order to determine if any have the potential to be designated Villages and as such have an identified level of growth.¹² The assessment took a staged approach, taking into account factors that are thought to contribute to the sustainability of settlement.

Stage One/ Level 1 Criteria:

- Size of existing population and number of dwellings.
- The level of existing community services.
- Whether opportunities for housing and employment growth have been identified.

Stage Two/ Level 2 Criteria:

- Existing employment levels.
 - Accessibility by road, bus and rail.
 - Apparent attractiveness to the housing and employment market
 - Flood risk.
 - The presence of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land.
 - Ecological designations.
 - Conservation Areas.
- 5.22 The findings of the assessment provided SSDC with the opportunity to reassess the status of Stoke sub Hamdon within the settlement hierarchy. It is the smallest of the Rural Centres; the settlement has very limited scope for growth due to landscape constraints including the presence of Ham Hill Country Park and the number of commercial outlets in the centre is relatively restricted. As a result, SSDC considered that it is more appropriately classified as a Village rather than a Rural Centre.
- 5.23 The assessment of Rural Settlements concluded that there are 12 settlements (including Stoke sub Hamdon), which emerge as the most sustainable villages for development due to their performance against the criteria set out above, these are:
1. Abbas and Templecombe
 2. Broadway and Horton
 3. Charlton Adam and Charlton Mackrell
 4. Combe St Nicholas
 5. Curry Rivel

¹² The Potential of Rural Settlements to be Designated 'Villages', December 2018

6. Henstridge
7. Keinton Mandeville
8. North Cadbury
9. Queen Camel
10. Sparkford
11. Stoke sub Hamdon
12. Tatworth

5.24 Taking the above into account the revised Settlement Hierarchy is set out in the table below.

Table 5.2: Revised Settlement Hierarchy in Local Plan Review

Principal Town	
Yeovil	
Primary Market Towns	
Chard	Ilminster
Crewkerne	Wincanton
Local Market Towns	
Ansford and Castle Cary	Somerton
Langport and Huish Episcopi	
Rural Centres	
Bruton	Milborne Port
Ilchester	South Petherton
Martock and Bower Hinton	
Villages	
Abbas and Templecombe	Keinton Mandeville
Broadway and Horton	North Cadbury
Charlton Adam and Charlton	Queen Camel
Mackrell	Sparkford
Combe St Nicholas	Stoke sub Hamdon
Curry Rivel	Tatworth
Henstridge	
Rural Settlements	
Settlements that meet the criteria for Policy SS4	

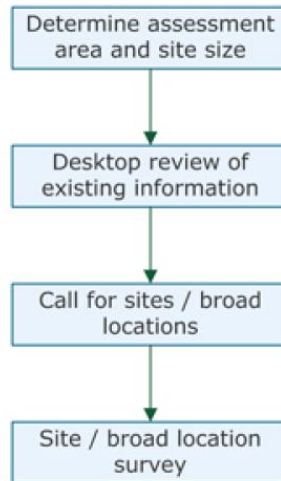
‘Bottom-up’ considerations

Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)

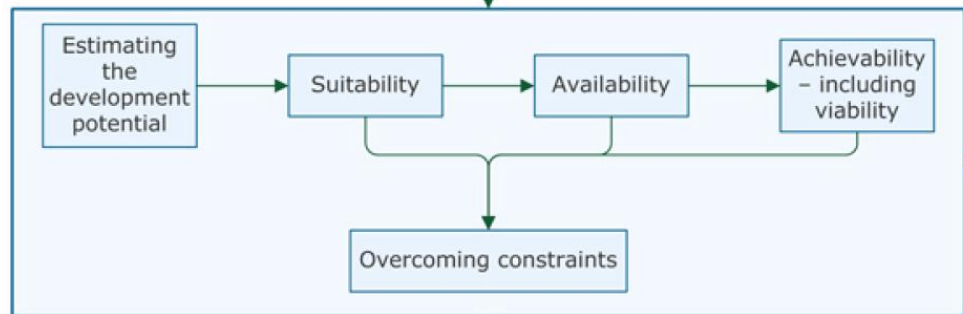
- 5.25 The main piece of evidence used to help determine whether the identified housing needs for the district can be met is the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA). This identifies the availability and suitability of sites across the district with the potential to accommodate housing and employment.
- 5.26 The HELAA was produced in accordance with the methodology set out in the PPG and involved five stages. These are illustrated in **Figure 1** on the next page.
- 5.27 The HELAA identified 370 sites as having potential for new dwellings or land for economic development, including on mixed use sites. Of these, 181 were assessed as being suitable, available and achievable. This is comprised of 133 housing sites, 24 employment sites and 24 mixed use sites.
- 5.28 It should be noted that, in accordance with the PPG, the HELAA only considered those sites that were identified as being capable of delivering five or more dwellings (net) or economic development at a minimum size of 0.25ha (or 500sqm net additional floorspace) or above. Sites falling below this threshold are considered potential windfall sites and were not included in the HELAA other than as part of the windfall allowance in the housing trajectory.

Figure 1: HELAA stages and tasks

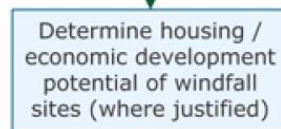
Stage 1- Site / broad location identification



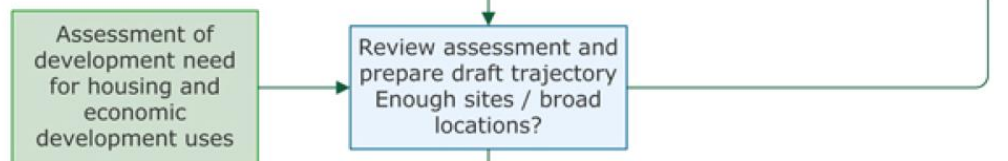
Stage 2 - Site / broad location assessment



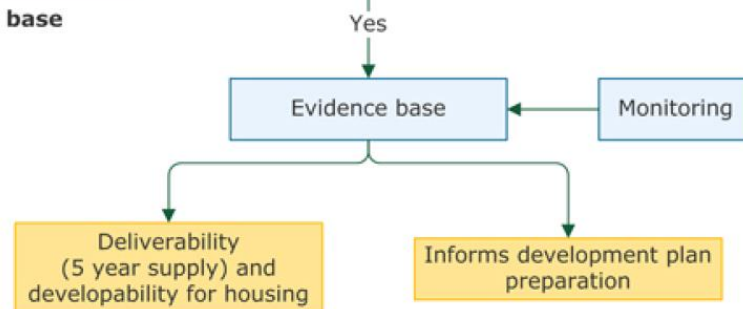
Stage 3 - Windfall assessment



Stage 4 - Assessment review



Stage 5 - Final evidence base



GIS analysis of site options

- 5.29 All of the 370 sites considered through the HELAA were subject to appraisal through the SA process. Given the number of site options and limited site-specific data availability it was not possible to simply discuss ('qualitative analysis') the merits of each site option under the SA framework.¹³
- 5.30 As such, work was undertaken to develop a methodology suited to site options appraisal, whilst also reflecting the SA framework as best as possible. The methodology essentially involved employing GIS data-sets, and measuring ('quantitative analysis') how each site option related to various constraint and opportunity features.
- 5.31 The detailed findings of this work are presented in **Appendix III**. It is important to note that individual site options are not considered to be a reasonable alternative in and of themselves as they are not mutually exclusive. No one site option could deliver the objectives of the plan.

Existing Settlements

- 5.32 A review of the HELAA findings for each of the higher tier settlements was carried out in order to identify if there are any realistic options or choices in terms of the direction/ location of future growth.
- 5.33 Consideration was given to the Principal Town, Primary Market Towns, Local Market Towns and Rural Centres as they are more likely to accommodate larger-scale growth. Villages and rural settlements were not given consideration as smaller scale growth is more appropriate and the potential for more or less development at these settlements can be explored through district-wide spatial strategy alternatives.
- 5.34 The settlements given detailed consideration are set out in the table below.

Table 5.3: Higher order settlements considered

Principal Town	
Yeovil	
Primary Market Towns	
Chard	Ilminster
Crewkerne	Wincanton
Local Market Towns	
Ansford and Castle Cary	Somerton
Langport and Huish Episcopi	
Rural Centres	
Bruton	Milborne Port
Ilchester	South Petherton
Martock and Bower Hinton	

- 5.35 Different quantum or levels of growth were not explored for each settlement as this could be taken into consideration through district-wide spatial strategy alternatives - i.e. options that propose more or less growth at particular settlements.
- 5.36 In summary, realistic options for the direction of growth were only identified for six of the settlements based on the findings of the HELAA, and these are:

¹³ Qualitative analysis of site options would only have been possible were time / resources available to generate data/ understanding for all site options through site visits and discussion with promoters. Without this data/ understanding, any attempt at qualitative analysis would have led to a risk of bias (e.g. sites that are being proactively promoted may have been found to perform favourably).

- Yeovil;
- Ilminster;
- Somerton;
- Bruton;
- Martock and Bower Hinton; and
- Milborne Port.

5.37 The detailed findings of this work including the appraisal of options are presented in **Appendix IV**.

New Settlements

5.38 A new settlement needs to be of sufficient size to support the required range of social and physical infrastructure. The Government's Garden Communities prospectus (2018) suggests that over 10,000 homes is needed for a new Garden Town and between 1,500 to 10,000 homes for a Garden Village.

5.39 Only two sites were submitted through the call for site process of a size that could potentially deliver a Garden Town or Village:

- Site E/YEOT/0001, is being promoted for a new Garden Town at a total area of around 1,950 ha.
- Site W/DONY/0001, is being promoted for a new Garden Town at a total area of around 474 ha.

5.40 The HELAA found that both sites are available but are not suitable or achievable at this stage. Both proposals are at an early stage of development and have not yet costed for the necessary infrastructure that will be required. Research on the speed and rate of delivery of large-scale housing suggests that neither of these sites would be able to deliver any housing during this Local Plan Review period.¹⁴ This is demonstrated by the slow delivery of housing on large-scale sites proposed in the currently adopted Local Plan on the fringes of Yeovil, Chard and Crewkerne.

5.41 The potential for the delivery of a Garden Town or Village should be explored again in the future through plan-making and the SA process.

¹⁴ Nathaniel Litchfields & partners (2016) Start to Finish - How Quickly do Large-Scale Housing Sites Deliver?
<https://lichfields.uk/media/1728/start-to-finish.pdf>

6. Establishing the Reasonable Alternatives

- 6.1 The evidence around housing supply indicates that, as of March 2018, there have been 1,179 dwellings already built since the beginning of the plan period (2016). A further 5,813 dwellings have been granted planning permission. The total supply is therefore 6,992 dwellings.
- 6.2 Based on this standard method and the 2014-based household projections, the housing need figure for the plan period is calculated as 716 (rounded) dwellings per annum or 14,322 (rounded) dwellings during the plan period. In line with the NPPF, a suitable buffer on the housing need figure will also be required in order to provide flexibility.
- 6.3 Take the housing supply away and we are left with a shortfall or residual housing requirement of at least 7,330 dwellings (not including a buffer) during the life of the Local Plan Review. The HELAA identified 133 housing sites and 24 mixed use sites as being suitable, achievable and deliverable with the potential to deliver around 12,540 dwellings¹⁵.
- 6.4 As explained in Chapter 5, at this stage there are no suitable or achievable sites for a Garden Town or Village within the District that could deliver housing during the Local Plan Review period. However, this is likely to be an option that is more realistic for the next Local Plan period and should therefore be developed further.
- 6.5 In terms of the existing settlements, the evidence suggests (Annual Monitoring Report and Five-year Housing Land Supply Paper) that the market has not been delivering as many new homes in Yeovil, Chard, Crewkerne, Ansford & Castle Cary, Somerton and Ilchester as was predicted. This is largely due to the fact that large urban extensions take longer to masterplan and advance through the planning application process resulting in delays in delivery. In comparison, Wincanton, Langport/ Huish Episcopi, Milborne Port, South Petherton and in particular the rural settlements have been delivering a greater number of new homes than predicted.
- 6.6 Taking the above into account, four alternative spatial strategy options were identified, and these are described in more detail below.
- 6.7 It is important to remember that a large proportion of development proposed under each of the options is comprised of committed development (completions and sites with existing planning permission). It should also be noted that large scale growth proposed in Yeovil through the two SUEs, at the Chard Eastern Development Area and at the Crewkerne Key Site are a constant through all the options. They are allocated in the currently adopted Local Plan and the Council is committed to the delivery of development in these areas.
- 6.8 The variation between options therefore reflects the following:
- Where the market is delivering; and
 - More or less growth directed towards the higher (The Principal Town (Yeovil), Primary market Towns and Local Market Towns) and lower (Rural Centres, Villages and Rural Settlements) order settlements.
- 6.9 The following assumptions are made in terms of higher and lower growth at settlements:
- **Yeovil Town Centre** - options for increased growth assume higher densities on the four town centre sites.
 - **Yeovil other sites** - options for increased growth assume 25% more growth at sites on the edge of Yeovil and options for less growth a reduction on these sites by 50%.

¹⁵ The number of dwellings reflects the "Panel Yield (final)" box of the site assessment form which represents the final yield for the site.

- **Chard** - no scope for any significant additional growth and minimal opportunity to significantly reduce growth given the Chard Eastern Development Area. Options that propose lower growth assume that there would be no further allocations outside the CEDA.
- **Crewkerne** - options for higher growth include development at sites W/CREW/0006 (78 dwellings), W/CREW/0015 (10 dwellings), W/MERR/0011 (25 dwellings), W/MERR/0012 (8 dwellings), W/CREW/0027 (22 dwellings) and W/CREW/0028 (19 dwellings). Options for less growth assume development only on the smaller sites W/CREW/0024 and W/CREW/0012.
- **Ilminster** - options for higher growth include development at sites W/ILMI/0002 (42 dwellings), W/ILMI/0102 (44 dwellings), W/ILMI/0004 (41 dwellings) and W/ILMI/0005 (30 dwellings). Options for less growth assume only development at Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301), which has outline planning permission for 400 dwellings subject to s106.
- **Wincanton** - options for higher growth include development at sites E/WINC/0002 (19 dwellings), E/WINC/0004 (152 dwellings) and E/WINC/0007 (49 dwellings). Options for lower growth assume a reduced amount of development to the south west.
- **Ansford and Castle Cary** - options for higher growth include development at sites E/ANSF/0012 (140 dwellings), E/ANSF/0500 (12 dwellings) and E/CACA/1101 (81 dwellings). Options for lower growth assume reduced level of growth to the North West.
- **Langport and Huish Episcopi** - options for higher growth include development at N/HUEP/0002 (16 dwellings). Options for lower growth assume development only at the smaller site (N/HUEP/0001) within settlement boundary.
- **Somerton** - options for higher growth include development at sites N/SOME/0007 (130 dwellings), N/SOME/0800 (10 dwellings) and N/SOME/0002 (80 dwellings). Options for lower growth assume reducing the scale of growth by half at N/SOME/0014.
- **Bruton** - options for higher growth include development at sites E/BRUT/0002 (58 dwellings) and E/BRUT/0008 (84 dwellings). Options for less growth assume development only at the smaller site E/BRUT/0006.
- **Ilchester** - options for higher growth include an increased scale of development at site E/ILCH/0002. Options for lower growth assume 50% less development at site E/ILCH/0002.
- **Martock and Bower Hinton** - options for higher growth include development at sites N/MART/0010B (35 dwellings), N/MART/0035 (140 dwellings), N/MART/0013 (18 dwellings) and N/MART/0025 (37 dwellings). Options for lower growth assume less growth (around 50% less) at sites to the north west.
- **Milborne Port** - options for higher growth include development at sites E/MIPO/0014 (48 dwellings), E/MIPO/0800 (46 dwellings) and E/MIPO/0003 (70 dwellings). Options for lower growth assume delivery only at E/MIPO/0023 as there is outline permission pending for 65 dwellings.
- **South Petherton** - options for higher growth include development at N/SOPE/0016 (57 dwellings). Option for lower growth include development only at the smaller site N/SOPE/0001/10.
- **Villages** - Options for higher growth include roughly all the suitable, available and achievable sites at the villages identified through the HELAA. Option for lower growth assume half the level of development at these settlements.
- **Rural Settlements** - Options for higher growth include assume a higher level of windfall at these rural settlements. Options for lower growth assume half the level of growth.

Option 1: Preferred Option

- 6.10 This option seeks to focus housing and economic growth in Yeovil, as the Principal Town, and the Primary Market Towns. In recognition of the rural nature of the District, some growth is supported in the Local Market Towns, Rural Centres, Villages and Rural Settlements. This is in order to ensure more sustainable and self-contained communities that are better placed to offer a range of opportunities to all of their residents. It is intended the overall approach will support the retention of strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

Option 2: Market led option

- 6.11 This option is market led reflecting where new homes have recently been delivered in the district. It involves reduced delivery at Yeovil, Chard, Crewkerne, Ansford & Castle Cary, Somerton and Ilchester; and increased delivery in Wincanton, Landport & Huish Episcopi, Milborne Port, South Petherton, the Villages and Rural Settlements.

Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements and less in the lower order settlements

- 6.12 This option increases the level of growth at Yeovil as the Principal Town, Primary Market Towns and Local Market Towns and reduced growth in the Rural Centres, Villages and Rural Settlements.

Option 4: Less growth in the higher order settlements and more in the lower order settlements

- 6.13 This option reduces the level of growth at Yeovil as the Principal Town, Primary Market Towns and Local Market Towns and increases the level of growth directed to the Rural Centres, Villages and Rural Settlements.

- 6.14 **Table 6.1** on the following page sets out the four options in more detail.

Table 6.1: The reasonable spatial strategy alternatives

	Option 1: Preferred Option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Completions	1,179	1,179	1,179	1,179
Permissions	5,813	5,813	5,813	5,813
Total	6,992	6,992	6,992	6,992
Yeovil existing SUEs	1,565	1,565	1,565	1,565
Yeovil Town Centre	400	400	600	400
Yeovil other sites	922	461	1,152	461
Yeovil Total	2,887	2,426	3,317	2,426
Chard	1,490	1,342	1,490	1,342
Crewkerne	480	110	642	110
Ilminster	720	720	877	400
Wincanton	220	440	440	110
Primary Market Towns Total	2,910	2,612	3,449	1,962
Ansford and Castle Cary	161	80	394	80
Langport and Huish Episcopi	180	196	196	80
Somerton	140	70	360	70
Local Market Towns Total	481	346	950	230
Bruton	65	65	5	207
Ilchester	200	100	100	900
Martock and Bower Hinton	210	210	105	440
Milborne Port	140	304	65	304
South Petherton	55	112	10	112
Local Market Towns Total	670	791	285	1,963
Villages Total	722	1,070	361	1,070
Rural Settlements Total	876	976	488	976
Total number of dwellings	15,538	15,213	15,842	15,619
% over OAN (14,322)	8%	6%	11%	9%

7. Appraisal of the Reasonable Alternatives

- 7.1 The spatial strategy options identified in **Table 6.1** were subject to a comparative appraisal against the SA Framework and the detailed findings are presented in **Appendix V**. A summary of the findings is presented in **Table 7.1** below.
- 7.2 Detailed appraisal methodology is explained in **Appendix V** but in summary: The appraisal table comprises a row for each of the objectives that make up the SA Framework (see **Table 3.1**). Within each row the alternatives are categorised in terms of potential to result in 'significant effects' (using **red/ green**) and also ranked in order of relative performance (with ' = ' used to denote instances where the alternatives perform on a par, i.e. it not possible to differentiate between them). If an option is ranked as 1 then it is preferred to an option that is ranked 2. Please note that the rank is not linked to the potential for a significant effect.

Table 7.1: Summary appraisal of the spatial strategy options

Summary findings and conclusions				
SA Theme	Categorisation and rank			
	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Communities	1	3	2	4
Economy and Employment	2	3	1	3
Health and Equalities	1	3	2	4
Transport and Movement	2	3	1	4
Energy and Climate Change	2	3	1	4
Water resources, Quality and Flooding	=	=	=	=
Soil and Land	=	=	=	=
Biodiversity and Geodiversity	=	=	=	=
Landscape and Townscape	1	3	2	3
Historic Environment	1	3	2	3

- 7.3 The appraisal found that there is little to differentiate between the options with regard to the water environment, soil and biodiversity related themes. All of the options are likely to have a significant long term residual negative effect as a result of the loss of greenfield and agricultural land.
- 7.4 Options 1 and 3 perform more positively against SA themes relating to communities, health, economy, transport and climate change compared to Options 2 and 4 as they focus more growth at the higher order settlements where there is better access to existing employment and facilities/ services. This will help to reduce reliance on the private vehicle and encourage a modal shift; however, it is acknowledged that given the rural nature of the district the significance of this is uncertain at this stage.
- 7.5 Options 2 and 4 would result in a higher level of growth at lower order settlements where there is general poorer access to employment opportunities and facilities/ services. This is more likely to encourage the trend of private vehicle use and could also impact the more vulnerable and less mobile members of the community, such as the elderly.

- 7.6 Options 1 distributes growth based on the settlement hierarchy and was considered more likely to meet the needs of all communities in the district. It therefore performs more positively against SA themes relating to communities and health and equalities. Option 3 focuses a greater level of growth at the higher order settlements and is therefore less likely to meet the needs of the rural communities. Conversely Options 2 and 3 direct a higher level of growth to the lower order settlements and are less likely to meet the needs of Yeovil and the Principal Market Towns.
- 7.7 Option 1 directs development to areas that are less sensitive in landscape terms, as a result the appraisal found that it is not likely to have a significant long term residual negative effects on the landscape and historic environment SA themes. The other options would all result in development in areas that are more sensitive in landscape terms and are therefore more likely to have significant residual negative effects on the rural character and historic environment of the district.

8. Developing the Preferred Approach

Introduction

- 8.1 This Chapter presents the Council's response to the alternatives appraisal and the Council's reasons for selecting its preferred approach in light of alternatives appraisal and other factors.

The Council's outline reasons for choosing the preferred approach

- 8.2 The following provides a brief explanation of the spatial strategy being advanced for the Local Plan Review including the reasons for not following alternative spatial options that are potentially available.
- 8.3 Option 1 is the preferred option as it reflects the settlement hierarchy and focuses housing and economic growth in Yeovil, as the Principal Town, and the Primary Market Towns. In recognition of the rural nature of the District, some growth is supported in the Local Market Towns, Rural Centres, Villages and Rural Settlements. This is in order to ensure more sustainable and self-contained communities that are better placed to offer a range of opportunities to all of their residents. It is intended the overall approach will support the retention of strong, vibrant and healthy communities.
- 8.4 The Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (2018) identifies sufficient suitable, available and achievable sites, through housing and mixed use development, to deliver the quantum of growth required to meet South Somerset's local housing needs.
- 8.5 Whilst the focus of growth concentrates on Yeovil and the Market Towns, if very little or no growth were directed towards Rural Centres, Villages and Rural Settlements, there would be a failure to provide the full range and mix of new housing and employment opportunities required across the District. This would likely lead to increased house prices in rural locations, making homes even less accessible to the wider market, and consequently resulting in less balanced and less sustainable rural communities overall.
- 8.6 The introduction of a Villages category of settlement aims to direct growth away from the smaller Rural Settlements. This approach seeks to reduce the demand for growth in less sustainable places and encourages growth where there is a greater concentration of services and facilities. It is considered this results in a more balanced settlement hierarchy.
- 8.7 Employment growth in rural locations is focussed on the main transport corridors, maximising the potential of the A303/A358 to the economy.
- 8.8 The market led option (Option 2) has not been progressed. Ongoing monitoring of the adopted South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 has identified that housing delivery in the Market Towns and Rural Settlements of the district remains strong. Indeed, delivery is ahead of target and greater than could be envisaged at this point in time. Conversely, new housing in many of the District's larger settlements has not been delivered at the rate anticipated by the Local Plan.
- 8.9 However, it is anticipated these trends will not continue over the longer term. Planning applications for the development of the Yeovil SUEs are now reaching determination stage and the Council is, through its Council Plan 2016-2021 and Annual Action Plan, seeking to accelerate housing delivery, particularly by focussing on enabling the planned large-scale housing growth at Yeovil, Chard and Crewkerne.
- 8.10 Such policy measures should assist in the move away from a market led option which, if left unchecked, would continue to focus growth in more rural parts of the District and could result in unsustainable patterns of development emerging whereby new homes and employment opportunities are located away from essential services and infrastructure. This would result in significant negative impacts on the natural and built environment of South Somerset which we all value.

- 8.11 For similar reasons Option 4 (More growth in the lower order settlements) has also been rejected as it would result in unsustainable patterns of development whereby new homes and employment opportunities are located away from essential services and infrastructure.
- 8.12 More growth in Yeovil, Primary Market Towns and Local Market Towns and less in the lower order settlements (Option 3) has also been rejected. While this would result in more sustainable patterns of development compared to Options 2 and 4 there is the potential for significant impacts on the landscape and historic environment around the higher order settlements.
- 8.13 A new Garden Town/ Village has been given consideration through plan-making and the process; however, it is not considered a realistic or reasonable option at this stage. Such proposals require significant master-planning and investment including funding from the Government; they also take a long time to deliver.
- 8.14 Given that councils are expected to maintain a five-year supply of deliverable housing land and the Housing Delivery Test imposes penalties on councils where delivery is below the annual housing target, it is now more important than ever to ensure a constant supply of readily available sites.
- 8.15 At this time, the designation of a Garden Town or Village cannot be seen as a realistic alternative to developing sites elsewhere in the District. The Council is able to identify enough sites to meet identified housing need and has not made the decision to commit resources to actively pursue a Garden Village/ Town proposal. Nevertheless, the situation will be kept under review and the concept may be considered further in future subject to appropriate circumstances existing.

Part 2: What are the SA findings
at this current stage?

9. Introduction (to Part 2)

- 9.1 The aim of this chapter is to present an appraisal of the Draft Local Plan Review, as currently presented in the Regulation 18 Preferred Options Document.

Methodology

- 9.2 The appraisal identifies and evaluates ‘likely significant effects’ of the plan on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability objectives identified through scoping (see **Table 3.1**) as a methodological framework. In total, there are 10 SA themes as follows:
- Communities
 - Economy and Employment
 - Health and Equalities
 - Transport and Movement
 - Energy and Climate Change
 - Water Resources, Quality and Flooding
 - Soil and Land
 - Biodiversity and Geodiversity
 - Landscape and Townscape
 - Historic Environment
- 9.3 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the policies under consideration, and understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a ‘no plan’ scenario) that is inevitably limited. Given uncertainties there is a need to make assumptions, e.g. in relation to plan implementation and aspects of the baseline that might be impacted. Assumptions are made cautiously, and explained within the text (with the aim to strike a balance between comprehensiveness and conciseness/ accessibility). In many instances, given reasonable assumptions, it is not possible to predict ‘significant effects’, but it is nonetheless possible and helpful to comment on merits (or otherwise) of the Plan in more general terms.
- 9.4 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking account of the effect characteristics and ‘significance criteria’ presented within Schedules 1 and 2 of the SEA Regulations.¹⁶ So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. Cumulative effects are also considered, i.e. the potential for the Plan to impact an aspect of the baseline when implemented alongside other plans, programmes and projects. Explicit reference is made within the appraisal as appropriate (given the need to balance the desire of systematic appraisal with a desire to ensure conciseness/ accessibility).

Adding structure to the appraisal

- 9.5 Whilst the aim is essentially to present an appraisal of ‘the plan’ under each of the SA objectives,¹⁷ it is appropriate to also give stand-alone consideration to elements of the Plan. As such, within the appraisal narratives below, sub-headings are used to ensure that stand-alone consideration is given to distinct element of the Plan, before the discussion under a final sub-heading concludes on the Submission Plan as a whole.

¹⁶ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

¹⁷ Regulations require simply an appraisal of ‘the plan’.

- 9.6 Within these narratives, specific policies are referred to only as necessary (i.e. it is not the case that systematic consideration is given to the merits of every plan policy in terms of every sustainability objective).

10. Appraisal of the Local Plan Review

Introduction

- 10.1 As introduced above, the aim of this chapter is to present an appraisal of the Preferred Options Local Plan Review under the SA framework. A commentary on the spatial strategy is provided as well as an appraisal of the plan as a whole and finally a commentary on cumulative effects; for each of the 10 SA themes.

Communities

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.2 The proposed spatial strategy seeks to maximise levels of self-containment and disperses development across the main towns and centres that support population growth within South Somerset, including those towns that have experienced the highest levels of growth such as Yeovil, Chard and Ilminster. Primary Market Towns are the preferred locations for development (outside of Yeovil as the Principal Town), with the spatial strategy aiming to increase the self-containment of these settlements and enhance their service roles; reflecting the aspirations of the NPPF (2019, paragraph 91) in promoting stronger communities.
- 10.3 Together, the proposed allocations will deliver a total of 15,538 new homes within South Somerset, exceeding the assessed overall housing need (using the standard methodology as set out in planning practice guidance) of 14,322 homes over a 20-year plan period. The spatial strategy will provide and maintain a five-year housing land supply and provide flexibility for adjustments in predicted growth levels, supporting significant positive effects for communities in this respect.
- 10.4 The proposed sites will support development in areas of higher deprivation within Yeovil, Chard, Crewkerne, Ilton and Martock and Bower Hinton; and the spatial strategy seeks to reduce inequalities between rural and urban areas through supporting and sustaining a hierarchy of vibrant town centres across the district. The Yeovil Town Centre sites (TC1) will deliver brownfield regeneration within an area of high deprivation (0-20% most deprived), supporting reduced inequalities and positive effects for local communities.
- 10.5 The spatial strategy also seeks to meet the different needs of the community, including the pursuit of allocations providing 23 new residential pitches, 10 transit pitches and 6 travelling showpeople plots to meet the latest identified needs of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities within South Somerset (evidenced by the Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment Update in 2013). These needs will largely be met through small publicly owned sites which the Council will seek to establish, given evidenced preference within the communities for small, family owned sites.

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

- 10.6 South Somerset experiences population growth mainly because of inward migration from within the UK and mostly in the 65-69 age group, highlighting the attractiveness of the Plan area to retirees. With an ageing population alongside a decline in younger age cohorts, a key identified challenge for the plan lies in providing a sufficiently large competitive labour force in the future. The spatial strategy addresses this by promoting sites for employment development, as well as the development of town and rural centres; enhancing their retail and service roles and maximising opportunities for local employment and housing in more accessible locations. The historic environment (through Policy EQ3) is also recognised for its potential to support tourism and local economies.
- 10.7 Housing policies support the delivery of a range of housing types, sizes and tenures, including the delivery of affordable housing. Policy HG4 identifies the balance of housing sizes to be delivered on major development sites, with requirements for a majority of 2 and 3-bedroom properties to meet identified local needs. Policy HG5 further supports the delivery of care

homes and specialist accommodation, and Policy HG6 commits to the growth requirements of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople communities within the district. Dwellings in the countryside and agricultural housing needs are also considered through Policies HG7:HG9.

- 10.8 The Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Strategic Housing Market Assessment, October 2016 (SHMA) provides the key evidence underpinning the Local Plan Review's approach to affordable housing policy, identifying a net annual affordable housing need in South Somerset of 206 homes, and particularly for 1 and 2-bedroom properties. The estimated need equates to 29% (rounded) of the overall annual housing target of at least 716 dwellings each year, and this figure is carried through to policy requirements (Policy HG2). Policy HG2 identifies, in line with the findings of the SHMA, that 80% of affordable housing provisions should be provided as affordable housing for rent, and the remaining 20% should be other forms of affordable homes, including starter homes, discounted market sales housing and other routes to affordable home ownership. Under these percentages greater provisions of 1 and 2-bedroom properties are expected.
- 10.9 Strong communities are further encouraged through the delivery of new neighbourhood centres, employment, primary schools, health centres, sports provision, and open spaces. Supporting a net gain in community services and facilities overall. The large-scale development sites at the Yeovil SUEs which provide significant contributions in this respect, with Policy YV1 identifying required provisions of a new primary school, a health centre and a new neighbourhood centre, in both the north and south development areas.
- 10.10 The settlement strategy outlined in Policy SS1 largely protects the countryside from development, which will support the retention of settlement identities and maximise the potential for effective integration and social inclusion, whilst also ensuring communities have good access to the surrounding countryside for recreational and leisure purposes. Alongside the promotion of high-quality design in Policy EQ2, minor positive effects are anticipated for communities.
- 10.11 Overall, significant long-term positive effects are anticipated as a result of the spatial strategy identifying land to meet the forecasted housing and economic development needs of all the communities within South Somerset. The spatial strategy is considered likely to support reductions in existing inequalities with a focus on improving self-containment, town centre regeneration proposals in Yeovil, and net gains in community service and facility provisions overall. This is supported by the policy framework which seeks to ensure development delivers an appropriate balance of housing types, sizes and tenures.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

- 10.12 The delivery of the combined level of housing and employment need across the HMA and Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) will lead to significant positive cumulative effects in terms of meeting the sub-regional housing demands.

Economy and Employment

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.13 The structure of the South Somerset economy has traditionally been dominated by agriculture, manufacturing and advanced engineering. The predominance of manufacturing is offset by an under-representation of what might be termed "office based" activities such as financial, professional and business services. Whilst current participation in the labour market is high, the economy has not seen any real growth in jobs in recent years. In terms of future employment growth, monitoring indicates that employment land is not being delivered at the rate required to meet the Local Plan target of 149.5 hectares by 2026. 54 hectares of net additional land has been delivered since 2006, which represents only 36% of the target.¹⁸ However, whilst there has not been substantial growth in new jobs in recent years, with low

¹⁸ South Somerset District Council (2017) Economic Development Monitoring Report

unemployment and a declining working age population, this has not yet been of concern for the district.

- 10.14 The Council recognise that reliance on a relatively small number of activities such as manufacturing makes the district vulnerable to changes in the market.¹⁹ Therefore to ensure sustainable economic growth, the spatial strategy seeks to deliver an alignment between the delivery of housing and employment at a district-wide level. The Local Plan Review will assist the delivery of 9,360 new jobs by identifying 88ha of land for the development of employment uses throughout the Plan period. This is in accordance with the land and floorspace needs of businesses within the FEMA which broadly comprises South Somerset District, as identified through the Housing Market Areas and Functional Economic Market Areas in Somerset Report (2015)²⁰ and reiterated in the South Somerset Employment Land Review (2019). The employment sites identified in the spatial strategy will contribute to meeting the forecast increase in the total number of jobs in the FEMA over the Plan period; supporting the economic vitality and viability of the district.
- 10.15 The spatial strategy focusses growth towards Yeovil and the Primary Market Towns, aligning with the FEMA analysis (2017), which recommends that considerable focus be placed on the future economic role and function of Yeovil.²¹ Yeovil plays a significant economic role in the County and is the prime economic driver for South Somerset.²² The town is the largest in terms of physical size and trading ability in the district; with high levels of self-containment and also high levels of in-commuting. In this context, the spatial strategy seeks to deliver 24ha of employment land in Yeovil alone, of which a 5.14ha will be delivered through the two Yeovil SUEs, as set out in the previous Local Plan. Providing a level of employment alongside housing is anticipated to increase the prosperity of the settlement, and encourage long-term infrastructure delivery and service provision, as set out in Policy YV1.
- 10.16 However, the review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends (2017), and the Economic Development Monitoring Report (2017) highlight that the vast majority of land and floorspace which has been delivered is in locations substantially different to the policy aims of the current Local Plan Review. Whilst the Local Plan Review has sought to deliver employment land in the main settlements, the locations outside of these settlements, predominately in the Rural Settlements, is where the delivery has predominantly occurred. The Review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends (2017) states that viability is the biggest challenge for economic growth in the district, particularly for strategic sites that require substantial infrastructure delivery. As a result, a substantial proportion of recent development has been outside the main towns.
- 10.17 The Local Plan Review seeks to address the viability challenge through placing focus on retaining and upgrading existing employment sites, notably through regeneration at Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton Town Centres. Future plans for the regeneration of these town centres are integral to the Council's "investing in infrastructure" programme. In this context, 13.5ha of land is allocated for strategic growth at Chard, through the delivery of the Chard Eastern Development Area. The strategic approach to development is set out in the Chard Regeneration Plan (2009), and forthcoming Chard Refresh (2019), which includes significant infrastructure delivery, including a new primary school, neighbourhood centres, highway infrastructure, and sports and open space provision.²³ The implementation of the Chard Regeneration Project is a main aim of the Local Plan Review and will contribute positively towards delivering sustainable economic growth.
- 10.18 The review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends (2017), and the Economic Development Monitoring Report (2017) highlight that the vast majority of the net additional land and floorspace has occurred outside of the main settlements, with rural sites accounting

¹⁹ South Somerset District Council (2018) South Somerset Authority Monitoring Report, and reiterated in the South Somerset (2019) Employment Land Review.

²⁰ Opinion Research Services (2015) Housing Market Areas and Functional Economic Market Areas in Somerset Report

²¹ Hardisty Jones Associates (2017) South Somerset Employment Land Evidence: Review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends: Final Report

²² Lichfields (2017) South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study Final Report

²³ LDA (2009) Chard Regeneration Plan

for the majority of development.²⁴ However, there are settlements experiencing little net gain in land, but relatively high levels of net additional floorspace. This indicates that expansion of existing premises, changes of use within existing buildings, and the intensification of use on an existing site are playing an important role in driving economic activity; as much, if not more so, than delivering new land for economic development.²⁵ The spatial strategy therefore seeks to continue this trend, moving away from a sole focus on the delivery of new employment land, with only two thirds of new jobs requiring the identification of new land. Policies EP2 (Change of Use of Employment Land and Buildings) and EP3 (Enhancement of Existing Employment Areas) are key in this regard.

- 10.19 In recognition of the rural nature of the district, the spatial strategy directs a level of growth along the main strategic transport route connecting Somerset with the wider South West, maximising the potential of the A303 to the economy. This includes the Primary Market Towns of Ilminster and Wincanton, in addition to Rural Centres South Petherton, Stoke Sub Hamdon, Ilchester, which are all located along the A303. Notably, Land at Station Road, Ilminster is identified as a strategic employment site, allocated for 12.9ha of employment land, utilising Ilminster's location along the axis of the A303 and A358. The A303 corridor provides a strong 'east-west' axis through the district, facilitating business connectivity as well as easy access to markets, labour, goods and materials.
- 10.20 It is noted that South Somerset is an agricultural district and therefore the spatial strategy directs a level of growth to the Rural Settlements to support agri-businesses through a range of rural diversification projects; contributing positively towards achieving the Council's economic ambitions. Policies EP4 (Delivering Employment Land), EP5 (Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside) and EP6 (Farm Diversification) are relevant for such development.
- 10.21 Micro businesses are also of utmost importance to the district's economy. It is considered that villages may attract micro businesses if the location of the village offers significant opportunities for investment and growth (i.e. good connection with the A303). As such, the spatial strategy delivers small-scale economic development in the district's Villages, to support the jobs likely to come forward at these locations. This would positively affect the growth of the district's economy, supporting local businesses and developing the wider area. Development will accord with Policies SS4 (Development in Rural Settlements), EP4 (Delivering Employment Land in Villages, Rural Settlements and the Countryside) and EP5 (Expansion of Existing Business in the Countryside) in this regard.

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

- 10.22 Policy SS3 (Delivering New Employment Land) and Policy EP1 (Employment Sites) set out the approach to employment delivery throughout the Plan period, supporting the allocation of new sites for employment to meet future needs and ensure sufficient flexibility.
- 10.23 South Somerset is an agricultural district and supporting agri-businesses through a range of rural diversification projects will be important to realise the Council's economic ambitions. Policies EP4 (Delivering Employment Land), EP5 (Expansion of Existing Businesses in the Countryside) and EP6 (Farm Diversification) are relevant for such development.
- 10.24 The tourism sector in South Somerset is also long established and supporting further growth and value in this sector of the economy will be supported through Local Plan Review Policy EP8 (New and Enhanced Tourism Facilities).
- 10.25 Policy EP2 (Change of use of Employment Land and Buildings) sets out that the re-use of employment land and buildings will be supported where it can be demonstrated that there is no identified need for the employment land or where permitted development rights apply. The enhancement of existing employment areas is further supported through Policy EP3 (Enhancement of Existing Employment Areas). Attracting, developing and maintaining higher

²⁴ South Somerset District Council (2017) Economic Development Monitoring Report: Land and Floorspace Delivered in South Somerset

²⁵ Economic Development Monitoring Report (2017)

- skilled and higher professional occupations to the area will ensure that South Somerset's economy is more competitive and resilient in the longer term.
- 10.26 Policy TC4 (Retail Hierarchy) retail development must be directed to Yeovil Town Centre first, followed by the centres set out in the retail hierarchy. This reflects the role and function of the district's retail centres and ensures the future vitality of South Somerset. Policy TC5 (Location of Main Town Centre Uses (The Sequential Test)) should also be considered in this respect.
- 10.27 Policy TC6 (Floorspace Thresholds for Impact Assessment) requires that an impact assessment be carried out if the development is over the established floorspace thresholds. Anything at or above these would need to demonstrate that there would not be a significant adverse impact on economic vitality and viability; i.e. of local centres and high streets.
- 10.28 A range of other policies are of relevance to the achievement of economic objectives, including the policies dealing with 'Transport' and 'Infrastructure'. Policies TA3 (Travel Plans) and TA4 (Transport Impact of New Development) seek to improve levels of congestion, connectivity and accessibility around the district through securing inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport. Policy TA1 (Low Carbon Travel) requires major development to enable ease of working from home by "*providing a designed in specific work area with broadband connections*". This will contribute positively towards sustainable economic growth and attracting businesses to the district.
- 10.29 Policy SS5 (Infrastructure Delivery) seeks to deliver the timely provision of infrastructure necessary to enable development throughout the district to proceed. This includes but is not limited to transport, education, healthcare, and community facilities; having an indirect positive effect on businesses that may be reliant on this provision.
- 10.30 Overall, long-term significant positive effects are anticipated given the identification of new employment land and expected delivery of new jobs, supporting the economic vitality and viability of the district. In line with the FEMA analysis (2017) considerable focus is placed on the future economic role and function of Yeovil and the A303 corridor, and to address existing viability issues this is delivered alongside focused regeneration at Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton Town Centres. Given evidence indicating that expansion, intensification and change of use have historically provided relatively high levels of net additional floorspace, this approach is also supported by the proposed policy framework. The Local Plan Review also recognises the role of agri-businesses and tourism in South Somerset and provides support for rural diversification and further growth of the tourism economy. The multifaceted approach to supporting and sustaining economic vitality and viability is likely to realise significant benefits in the long-term.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

- 10.31 The NPPF (2019) requires local planning authorities to have a "*clear understanding of business needs within the economic markets operating in and across their area*" and "*work together with county and neighbouring authorities and with Local Enterprise Partnerships*" (paragraph 160). It is therefore considered that cumulative effects in this respect relate to the combination of proposed development in neighbouring districts which comprise the FEMAs for the County (Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset, Taunton Deane and West Somerset).
- 10.32 Effects are likely be considered in terms of the consistent broad economic/spatial geography across the wider West of England region and broad areas that overlap across Somerset; namely the A303 corridor, M5 corridor, North Peninsular, and North East Triangle.²⁶

²⁶ Opinions Research Services (2015) Housing Market Areas and Functional Economic Market Areas in South Somerset

Health and Equalities

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.33 In terms of improving the health and wellbeing of residents and reducing inequalities, key issues relate to the need to address areas of rural deprivation, plan for the needs of an ageing population, protecting and enhancing important green assets, and ensure that communities have adequate access to community infrastructure, including health and recreation facilities.
- 10.34 The spatial strategy seeks to reduce inequalities between rural and urban areas through supporting and sustaining a hierarchy of vibrant town centres across the district. In this context, Primary Market Towns are the focal points for locally significant development (outside of Yeovil), with the spatial strategy aiming to increase the self-containment of these settlements and enhance their service roles; reflecting the aspirations of the NPPF (2019, paragraph 91) in promoting stronger communities.
- 10.35 Strong communities are further encouraged through the delivery of new neighbourhood centres, employment, primary schools, health centres, sports provision, and open spaces. This is in accordance with the new South Somerset Playing Pitch Strategy (2017), which identifies a priority list of deliverable projects to help to address current deficiencies; including identifying potential land for new provision, and providing evidence to protect and enhance existing facilities.²⁷ The Playing Pitch Strategy identifies key growth locations in accordance with the spatial strategy.
- 10.36 It is noted that a proportion of this provision will be delivered through the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs), which have been established through the previous Local Plan. Planning applications will need to have complied with the highest sustainability objectives and 'Garden City' design principles as previously established by Policy YV2 of the 2006-2028 Local Plan; and as set out in Policy YV1 (Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions) of the Local Plan Review. Both SUEs propose a similar scale of growth; providing sufficient land for economic development to allow for one job per household, and a range of community facilities to ensure a mix of uses and more sustainable communities. Notably, the Local Plan Review creates the opportunity for a new health centre in each of the two SUEs, contributing positively towards addressing the fact that the district's ageing population will likely need a 50% increase in provision of health and social care services by 2031.²⁸ Further to this, 40% green space is an aspirational target for the Yeovil SUEs, which will lead to long-term positive effects through providing attractive, green living environments which support healthy lifestyles.
- 10.37 The protection and enhancement of green infrastructure extends throughout the district; with the Local Plan Review recognising its role as an essential element of the character and appearance of an area, and the positive contribution it makes to health and wellbeing of the local community and the general quality of life. The current provision is set out within the IDP (2015/2016), and while high quality green space is recorded throughout the district, there is nonetheless an ongoing aspiration within the Council to continue to improve on the level of overall provision. The Local Plan Review therefore promotes green infrastructure provision throughout the district, first and foremost based upon the enhancement of existing areas. In areas of particular sensitivity, it is recognised that there is a role for open space provision in alleviating pressure on existing natural areas. This is particularly the case at Langport/ Huish Episcopi, where more open space provision for activities such as dog walking can alleviate pressures on the internationally designated Somerset Moors and Levels sites, given their close proximity. This will positively affect residents' physical and mental health through maintaining and enhancing high quality open space which encourage their active and continual use. It is noted that given the sensitivity of the Somerset Moors and Levels, measures are to be agreed with Natural England prior to development (IDP, 2015/2016).
- 10.38 Communities will be further strengthened through the Council's 'Regeneration Priority Projects' focused at Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton town centres. It is recognised that a

²⁷ South Somerset District Council (2017) South Somerset Playing Pitch Strategy: Strategy and Action Plan

²⁸ South Somerset District Council (2008) South Somerset Community Strategy 2008 – 2026 [online] available at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/EasysiteWeb/getresource.axd?AssetID=57136&type=full&servicetype=Attachment>

number of Local Super Output areas in Yeovil and Chard are within the most deprived 20% in England; however, conversely both towns have areas within the least deprived 20% in England. Planned regeneration proposals will improve the commercial, retail and leisure offer of the centres, which will therefore improve accessibility to services for residents, providing an increased level of support for those living in the most deprived areas.

- 10.39 Accessibility is also likely to be addressed through proposed improvements to sustainable transport networks in the district; particularly given the current limited provision. Notably, the uptake of sustainable travel is a specific priority for Yeovil, ensuring the centre is easy to get to and safe, convenient, and attractive to move through. Improving accessibility in this key centre will likely reduce reliance on the car for short journeys, leading to positive effects in terms of improved mental and physical health, and overall quality of life. This is a key issue for Yeovil considering the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) present. Given the rural nature of the district it cannot be overlooked that the private vehicle may still be relied upon for longer journeys. This may adversely affect the population's health, for example through exacerbating air quality issues in and around Yeovil AQMA.

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

- 10.40 Policy SS5 (Infrastructure Delivery) sets out the broad requirements for the delivery of infrastructure to support development; identifying that *"the Council will secure the provision of (or financial contributions towards) social, physical and environmental infrastructure and community benefits which the Council considers necessary to enable the development to proceed."* Specifically, Policy SS5 states that *"The types of infrastructure required will be considered on a site by site basis"*. The site allocation policies therefore set out the requirements for individual sites.
- 10.41 Policy HW2 (Green Infrastructure) seeks to *"protect existing green infrastructure against any adverse impact of development proposals"*, avoiding the loss of prominent features that contribute to character and local distinctiveness. Further to this, Policy HW2 promotes the provision of green infrastructure throughout the district by *"ensuring that development provides open spaces and green corridor links between new and existing green spaces."* Regard should also be given to Policies HW1 (Provision of Open Space, Outdoor Playing Space, Sports, Cultural and Community Facilities in New Development) and HW3 (Protection of Play Space and Youth Provision) in this respect, in addition to Policy EQ2 (General Development and Design) and Policy EQ4 (Landscape).
- 10.42 In terms of addressing rural inequality related to affordable housing, Policy SS4 (Development in Rural Settlements) requires that:
- "Development must be located within or adjacent to the existing built settlement, be commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement, and provide for two or more of the types of development listed below:*
- 1. Affordable housing to meet an identified local need in that settlement.*
 - 2. Market housing to meet an identified local need in that settlement.*
 - 3. Employment opportunities appropriate to the scale of the settlement.*
 - 4. Enhanced or new community facilities and services of an appropriate scale to serve the settlement, where a local need has been identified."*
- 10.43 This is with the aim to achieve a better overall variety of housing in the settlement and result in a more balanced community with better prospects for local people being able to obtain affordable housing and/ or access a wider range of market housing. Policy HG4 (Achieving a Mix of Market Housing) should also be considered in this respect.
- 10.44 In terms of addressing the needs of an ageing population, Policy HG5 (Care Homes and Specialist Accommodation) will ensure the housing needs of this specialist group are met, supporting *"proposals for care homes or similar specialist accommodation that meet an identified local need [...] where it is consistent with the Spatial Strategy."* Further to this, the

infrastructure provisions discussed above (Policy SS5) will contribute positively towards ensuring social inclusion, improving the safety of elderly residents within the community, and guaranteeing care is provided and accessible.

- 10.45 Overall, the delivery of the Local Plan Review will benefit residents through providing housing, employment, infrastructure, facilities, and services as set out within the IDP (2015/2016). In this context and in line with Policy YV1 (Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions), the Yeovil SUEs will be developed *“to the highest sustainability objectives and Garden City principles”*. Specifically, *“Sufficient land for economic development is provided to allow for one job per household, and a range of community facilities are included to ensure a mix of uses and more sustainable communities.”* This may contribute positively towards reducing localised deprivation in Yeovil.
- 10.46 Positive effects on the district’s main settlement are also anticipated through the delivery of Policy TC1 (Yeovil Town Centre Regeneration Sites), Policy TC2 (Development in the Designated Yeovil Town Centre) and TC3 (Chard Town Centre Regeneration Site). The regeneration sites will be underpinned by high quality urban design and placemaking principles; strengthening the roles of the centres as vibrant, attractive environments which promote self-containment.
- 10.47 Future provision in educational facilities is a concern for the district. To address this, the delivery of a new primary school is proposed at settlements where pressure is the most acute. Specific policies in this respect are:
- Policy YV1 (Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions) - requires that both SUEs provide for one primary school;
 - Policy CH1 (Chard Eastern Development Area) - allocated for strategic growth including one new primary school;
 - Policy IM1 (Housing Growth South West of Canal Way, Ilminster) - allocation includes the provision of a new primary school; and
 - Policy AC4 (Education Development at Torbay Road, Castle Cary) - Land safeguarded for a new primary school.
- 10.48 On balance, it is appropriate to conclude that the Local Plan Review would have significant positive long-term effects in terms of improving the health and wellbeing of residents and reducing inequalities.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

- 10.49 Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England’s wildlife and ecosystem services (DEFRA, 2011) has a mission *“to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people.”* The Somerset Biodiversity Strategy (2008) provides regional context to this, representing a long term blueprint for successful biodiversity conservation in Somerset.²⁹ At the local level, South Somerset’s Biodiversity Action Plan (SSDC, 2008) highlights that *“new development should seek opportunities to protect and enhance habitats and species, ensuring that the mosaics in which they are located are retained.”*
- 10.50 The need to maintain and enhance biodiversity and ecological connectivity is embedded throughout the Local Plan Review. Notably, the delivery of the Yeovil SUEs seeks to follow a standard of 40% greenspace, maintaining and enhancing the high quality urban edge landscape of Yeovil. It is therefore considered that the delivery of the Local Plan Review will deliver benefits at a regional, sub-regional, and local level, coinciding with the objectives of the higher level policy context discussed above.

²⁹ Wild Somerset (The Somerset Biodiversity Strategy) [online] available at: www.somerset.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allid=43032

- 10.51 Cumulative effects are also anticipated in relation to improvements to accessibility; resulting from the in-combination effects of enhancements to public transport and cross-boundary walking and cycling networks.

Transport and Movement

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.52 Existing travel patterns in South Somerset reflect its rural nature, with reliance on the car for many journeys. The spatial strategy therefore focusses development at the Principal Town of Yeovil, which has strong transport links, being closely connected to the A303 trunk road which runs east-west through the district, and the A30 and A37 which run through the town. Yeovil is also equipped with two mainline railway stations, Yeovil Pen Mill and Yeovil Junction which are located on the Weymouth-Bristol and Exeter-London Waterloo lines respectively. However, it is recognised that while there are sustainable transport options available in Yeovil, there remains a heavy reliance on the car for journeys to work and accessing facilities/services. The car currently dominates travel with over 40% of people travelling to work by car or van.³⁰ Key traffic routes across the town suffer from congestion at peak times, and road traffic is the prime cause of poor air quality in parts of the town, which has led to the designation of Yeovil AQMA.
- 10.53 A number of evidence base studies and strategies have been prepared by Somerset County Council and South Somerset District Council to ensure that the transport impacts of new development within Yeovil are fully addressed. Notably, the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension Traffic Modelling Non-Technical Forecasting and Addendums (2011), Yeovil Highway Infrastructure Report (2011), and Yeovil Transport Strategy Review (2006) have informed the spatial strategy.^{31,32,33}
- 10.54 In accordance with the findings of the evidence discussed above, the spatial strategy sets out substantial investment in measures to promote sustainable travel, notably through the Yeovil SUEs. In accordance with Policy YVI (Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions) development will be to the highest sustainability objectives and Garden City principles. The aim is to ensure that at least 30% of travel is by sustainable means, and homes are to be accessible to public transport. The spatial strategy also sets out a regeneration strategy for Yeovil (in addition to Chard and Wincanton), seeking to develop the town centres to bring about significant positive change. Notably, the Yeovil 'Town Centre Refresh' will include a Car Parking Action Plan, an Access Strategy and a Local Walking and Cycling Implementation Plan. This will contribute positively towards reducing the number of cars being used for short journeys to local shops and facilities, the town centre and travelling to work.
- 10.55 While it is recognised that achieving district-wide modal shift will be challenging, the Local Plan Review seeks to deliver robust travel planning which will reduce the need to travel and achieve an increase in uptake of sustainable travel where possible. This is in accordance with the Somerset Bus Strategy (2018), and the Somerset Active Travel Strategy (2012), comprising the Walking, Cycling, School Travel and Communication and Information Strategies.^{34,35} The spatial strategy provides locally significant development at the Market Towns, given they are well serviced, with good transport connections, and able to support a level of sustainable growth.³⁶ The Local Plan Review therefore capitalises upon the opportunity at these locations to improve people's health and wellbeing through more active

³⁰ 2011 Census Profile South Somerset District Profile

³¹ Somerset County Council (2011) Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extension Traffic Modelling Non-Technical Forecasting and Addendum

³² Somerset County Council (2011) Highway Infrastructure Requirements for Yeovil Urban Extensions: Yeovil Highway Infrastructure Report

³³ Somerset County Council (2006) Yeovil Transport Strategy Review

³⁴ Somerset County Council (2018) Somerset Bus Strategy 2018 – 2026 [online] available at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=134606>

³⁵ Somerset County Council (2018) Active Travel Strategy [online] available at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=43104>

³⁶ Lichfields (2017) South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study

lifestyles and Maximise access to local services without increasing congestion. This is in line with the aims of the Active Travel Strategy (2012).

- 10.56 Impacts of development on the transport network at the Market Towns locations have been considered through numerous evidence base documents including Somerset's Future Transport Plan (2011), Somerset's Future Transport Plan Implementation Plan (2013), the forthcoming 'Chard Refresh', and Wincanton Town Centre Strategy (2019).^{37,38,39} Notably, Somerset's Future Transport Plan Implementation Plan (2013) highlights that the County Council are leading a package of improvements on the A30/A303/A257 corridor. The benefits of improvements along this corridor have previously focused on improving connectivity with the far south west region to increase productivity and also to address problems with network resilience (i.e. a reliance on the M4/M5 link). At the local level, it is recognised that Highways England plans to dual the link between the M5 at Taunton and the A30/A358 to the Southfields roundabout at Ilminster. This will significantly enhance road connectivity to the motorway network for Ilminster and is likely to bring about opportunities for growth.
- 10.57 It is recognised that further localised improvements to transport provision are embedded throughout the Local Plan Review. The IDP (2015/2016) highlights that significant road infrastructure schemes are proposed in delivering development at Yeovil, Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, and Ansford/ Castle Cary, alongside sustainable travel measures. This will likely reduce residual adverse effects on transport infrastructure throughout the district.
- 10.58 There is some growth proposed in the Local Market Towns, Rural Centres, Villages and Rural Centres which may help to reduce the potential impacts of traffic and reduced air quality at Yeovil and to a lesser extent the Market Towns. However, it is also considered that development in the rural settlements may be dependent on Yeovil and Market Towns for access to services and facilities that are not provided for in the smaller settlements, and therefore may exacerbate adverse effects on roads with existing capacity issues.
- 10.59 A number of specific sustainable transport measures will be delivered through the Local Plan Review site allocation policies. In accordance with Policy TA4 (Transport Impact of New Development) all new development shall be required to address its own transport implications and shall be designed to maximise the potential for sustainable transport, i.e. through Section 106 contributions. Notably, under the terms of the Section 106 Agreement signed for the Yeovil SUE Lyde Road Key Site, highway works are proposed and will be funded by developers. This includes the creation of a roundabout at the Combe Street Lane. Larger schemes will also be required to prepare Transport Assessments in accordance with the opinion of the Transport Authority.

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

- 10.60 The transport section of the Local Plan Review (Policies TA1 – TA5) seeks to ensure that development and transport planning will be co-ordinated to reduce the need to travel by car, increase public transport use, cycling and walking and improve accessibility and safety in the district while accepting its rural nature. This will be achieved by safeguarding existing and new transport infrastructure, delivering improved public transport connections, provision of new services including new bus stops, timetables and shelters, securing inclusive, safe and convenient access on foot, cycle, and by public and private transport, providing for the charging of electric vehicles, and providing improved travel information (Travel Information Packs and an updated travel website) (Policy TA1 (Low Carbon Travel and Policy TA4 (Transport Impact of New Development)). Additionally, in accordance with Policy TA2 (Rail Facilities) *"the Council will encourage, promote and protect the development of land for passenger rail facilities and rail freight hubs"*.
- 10.61 Furthermore, Policy TA3 (Travel Plans) states that *"Travel Plans will be required in accordance with Somerset County Council's Travel Plan Guidance, commensurate with the*

³⁷ LDA Design (2009) Chard Regeneration Plan

³⁸ Somerset County Council (2013) Somerset's Future Transport Plan Implementation Plan [online] available at: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/future-transport-plan/>

scale of the development.”⁴⁰ Notably, “all development within the Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions will be required to meet the Framework Travel Plan criteria and be commensurate with Policy YV1 (Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions)”.

- 10.62 Policy SS5 (Infrastructure Delivery) seeks to ensure that new development is served and supported by appropriate infrastructure and services identified through the IDP (2015/16), which includes transport infrastructure.
- 10.63 Overall, the Local Plan Review recognises that new development should be linked to existing services and facilities and therefore capitalises upon the opportunity to develop homes in locations where residents have reduced travel between home, job and services and facilities, promoting sustainable transport. To this effect, delivering 33% of overall growth within the Principal Town of Yeovil, and 29% of growth to the Primary Market Towns will likely increase levels of self-sufficiency in the district, minimising the need to travel and maximising the use of sustainable transport modes where possible.
- 10.64 It is recognised that given the rural nature of the district, and the unreliability of sustainable transport in some locations, there may remain a level of dependency on the car for travel. This is likely to include the Rural Centres and Villages, where residents are anticipated to look to Yeovil and the Primary Market Towns to access wider services and employment, with the potential for negative effects on key transport networks throughout the district (notably the A30/A303/A257 corridor), increasing levels of congestion, pressure on highways infrastructure and parking. The Local Plan Review seeks to avoid and reduce the significance of these effects as much as possible through the provision of new and improved infrastructure, and other mitigation measures set out within site specific policies. Notably, Policy TA4 (Transport Impact of New Development) requires all new development to address its own transport implications; for example through *“ensuring that the expected nature and volume of traffic and parked vehicles generated by the development would not have a detrimental impact on the character or amenity of the area and would not compromise the safety and/or function of the local or strategic road networks in terms of both volume and type of traffic generated”*.
- 10.65 On balance, while it is considered that the impact of proposed development on the transport network is likely to be mitigated to some extent, given the rural nature of the district there is still likely to be some residual minor long term negative effects against this SA Theme, i.e. in terms of accessibility and encouraging the use of sustainable travel.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

- 10.66 Cumulative effects in this respect relate to the combination of proposed development in neighbouring districts through Local Plans and the Local Transport Plans. Namely, Local Transport Plans for Dorset, Devon, and Wiltshire County Councils are considered.
- 10.67 The cumulative effects of development are expected to lead to adverse effects including increased traffic flows and congestion on local and strategic highways infrastructure, effects on parking, and also potential impacts on air and noise quality. However, the cumulative effects of improvement schemes that are located both within and outside of the district that are being promoted will likely benefit traffic conditions within South Somerset. This includes a package of improvements on the A30/A303/A358 set out within the Somerset Future Transport Plan Implementation Plan (2013). Working closely with a project group including Wiltshire, Devon, Plymouth and Cornwall Councils as well as the Highways Agency, the project aims to identify a package of measures that could be delivered to ensure that current issues with journey time, safety and consistency/reliability are addressed.

⁴⁰ Somerset County Council (2011) Somerset County Council Travel Planning Guidance [online] available at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=43085>

Energy and Climate Change

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.68 The implementation of the spatial strategy proposed through the Local Plan Review will ultimately increase pressures on existing highways infrastructure and affect per capita emissions. However, it is recognised that development would occur anyway without the Local Plan Review and it seeks to maximise opportunities to facilitate this growth in sustainable locations, which are supported by infrastructure and sustainable transport choices. This will contribute positively towards reducing the need to travel, promoting increased levels of self-containment and restricting the growth of CO2 emissions.
- 10.69 The potential for new development to capitalise upon opportunities for energy efficiency is set out within the Local Plan Review (Policy EQ1 (Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset)). The delivery of renewable and low carbon energy is fully supported through the Local Plan Review; however, it is highlighted that in some cases there may be unacceptable impacts that could preclude renewable and low carbon energy development (i.e. large wind turbines on bird flight paths in or around the Somerset Levels and Moors Special Protection Area (SPA)/ Ramsar). Nonetheless, it is considered that there is reasonable scope for development (both housing and employment) to include measures to support renewable energy generation. The delivery of the Yeovil SUEs could be utilised in this respect, given they are of a scale which is more likely to incorporate renewable/ low carbon energy compared to smaller scale development.
- 10.70 As previously established by Policy YV2 of the 2006-2028 Local Plan; and as set out in Policy YV1 (Yeovil Sustainable Urban Extensions) of the Local Plan Review, the Yeovil SUEs will need to have complied with the “highest sustainability objectives and ‘Garden City’ design principles.” In particular, the following standard is to be pursued for these strategic locations for Yeovil:
- “More options for non-car travel (30% of trips should be non-car) – the high usage levels of traffic on Yeovil’s roads throughout the network point to retention of this standard to enable maximum development and development benefits at minimum adverse traffic impact.”*
- 10.71 This will contribute positively towards delivering sustainable communities and supporting improved per capita emission rates. This is of particular importance given the AQMA present at Yeovil.
- 10.72 The spatial strategy further seeks to strike a balance in the Rural Centres and Villages of delivering growth that can “that meet local housing need, extends local services and supports economic activity appropriate to the scale of the settlement”. This will avoid placing unnecessary constraint on existing infrastructure, and exacerbating reliance on the private car.
- 10.73 Improvements to green infrastructure networks throughout the district will support climate change adaptation through helping to regulate extreme temperatures, regulating surface water run-off, and, specifically in terms of woodland, acting as carbon-sinks. The Local Plan Review therefore seeks to protect and enhance the network of green spaces and corridors across the district, funded in part through CIL. This will ensure proper integration and coordination of infrastructure delivery to maximise benefits and support growth. Delivering enhancements to the green infrastructure network will be a key means of helping South Somerset adapt to the effects of climate change, delivering long-term positive effects. Where loss of green infrastructure as a result of development is unavoidable the Council will seek mitigation based on the principles within Natural England’s Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt).⁴¹

⁴¹ Natural England Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards [online] available at:
http://www.ukmaburbanforum.co.uk/documents/other/nature_nearby.pdf

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

- 10.74 Policy EQ1 (Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset) supports the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy, consistent with national policy. *“The Council will support proposals for development where they have demonstrated how climate change mitigation and adaptation will be delivered.”*
- 10.75 Policy EQ2 (General Development) is concerned with achieving a high quality, sustainable development, considering a wide range of indicators. Notably, in line with Policy EQ2, development proposals should *“optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks”*. Proposals should also *“have regard to South Somerset District Council’s published Development Management advice and guidance.”*
- 10.76 A number of Local Plan Review policies seek to protect and enhance green infrastructure throughout the district, recognising the need to help mitigate the consequences of climate change. Notably, Policy EQ7 (Woodland and Forests) prevents the loss of ancient woodland, recognising the *“environmental, social, and economic value of the district’s trees”*. In accordance with Policy EQ7, *“where secondary woodland is unavoidably lost through development it should be replaced with appropriate new woodland on at least the same scale.”* Policies HW2 (Green Infrastructure), EQ4 (Landscape), EQ5 (Biodiversity) and numerous site specific policies will also deliver positive effects in this regard.
- 10.77 A number of the wider policies proposed through the Local Plan Review will support climate change mitigation, and mitigation for the negative effects emerging as a result of the delivery of development to meet identified needs. Five transport policies are proposed (TA1 – TA5) seeking to address the topics of low carbon travel, sustainable transport, vehicle parking standards and measures to address transport impacts of new development. This is supported by Policy SS5 (Infrastructure Delivery) which seeks to guide infrastructure delivery, including renewable and low carbon energy, and provision and enhancement of open space; as well as Policy EQ2 (General Development and Design) which requires high quality, innovative design delivering low energy usage and/or wastage.
- 10.78 On balance, while there is the potential for both positive and negative effects, the overall level of growth proposed through the Local Plan is likely to lead to a residual minor negative effect on the Climate Change and Energy SA theme.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

- 10.79 Development proposed in the Local Plan Review has the potential to interact with development proposed in neighbouring districts through Local Plans. The Council has worked closely with other Local Authorities and Somerset County Council to mitigate for the potential impacts of increased growth on local and strategic highways infrastructure and resulting increase in greenhouse gas emissions. This includes a package of improvements on the A30/A303/A358 set out within the Somerset Future Transport Plan Implementation Plan (2013). Working closely with a project group including Wiltshire, Devon, Plymouth and Cornwall Councils as well as the Highways Agency, the project aims to identify a package of measures that could be delivered to address network resilience, improving journey times, and restricting the growth of CO₂ emissions from transport.

Water Resources, Quality and Flooding

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.80 The main river catchment covering most of South Somerset is the River Parrett and its tributaries (including the Yeo, Isle and Cary). Other river catchments are the River Axe in the district’s western edge, and the Stour and Brue in the east. The South Somerset Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2008) has assessed all sources of flooding across the area, and sets out locations of high risk.⁴² The SFRA has established that the risk of flooding within

⁴² Halcrow Group Limited (2008) South Somerset Strategic Flood Risk Assessment – Final Report

the study area arises from river, surface water, groundwater and sewer flooding. The spatial strategy seeks to avoid areas of medium-high flood risk, and promotes the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS) in order to manage flood risk. This is in accordance with the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2014) and the South West River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan (2016), which includes specific actions to manage flood risk in South Somerset.^{43,44}

- 10.81 The SFRA (2008) provides a preliminary review of the 13 settlements identified as potential sites for future development has been undertaken, and it is concluded that eight of the settlements contain elements that fall within Flood Zone 3, although in many cases the area affected is small. The conclusions of the SFRA informed the Local Plan strategy for locating new development and the approach to addressing flood risk issues in Policy EQ1 (Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset). In terms of Yeovil District Centre and the Primary Market Towns, Yeovil and Wincanton have been identified as settlements where the urban area intersects with existing Flood Zone 3. Looking specifically at Wincanton, areas of high flood risk exist to the south and to the north east and relate to the River Cale. SuDS are therefore required at this location, as set out within Policy EQ1, and in accordance with the Flood Risk Management Plans, and findings of the SFRA (2008) discussed above.
- 10.82 In terms of Yeovil, where the spatial strategy focusses development, the majority of flood risk and drainage problems relate to surface water and sewer flooding. The delivery of the two Yeovil SUEs, as set out within the previous Local Plan, will therefore be informed by a Surface Water Management Plan for Yeovil (2019-2020) which will set out infrastructure requirements for the town.⁴⁵ This will positively contribute towards resolving potential flood risk issues in and around the town.
- 10.83 There are existing issues at most of the other main settlements, particularly in relation to surface water flooding. Notably, Ilminster is constrained by Flood Zone 3 along the length of the River Isle and to the north and south of the A303. Housing and employment allocations at Station Road are located within Flood Zone 3, and it is therefore required through policies IM3 (Housing Growth at Station Road, Ilminster) and IM4 (Employment Growth at Station Road, Ilminster) that extensive flood risk mitigation works will be necessary and must be provided prior to occupation of the site. Additionally, a surface water feasibility study for the town is currently programmed for 2018/19, and developer contributions are required for flood remediation by the Environment Agency, and to upgrade the Southfields roundabout from Highways England.
- 10.84 Flooding is also an issue at the Local Market Towns and Rural Centres. Notably at Langport and Huish Episcopi, much of the town is surrounded by areas of high flood risk due to its proximity to the River Parrett and its flood plain which forms the Somerset Levels and Moors. Additional flood risk infrastructure is required to better manage flood risk at this location. Wider Local Plan Review policies explored under the next heading will be key to minimising the potential for negative effects on flood risk as a result of the spatial strategy.
- 10.85 Overall, in relation to surface water and sewer flooding, the SFRA (2008) considers that through close collaboration with Wessex Water and/or South West Water (as applicable and discussed above), South Somerset District Council can ensure all future development is sustainable. The River Parrett catchment does not have any major aquifers so groundwater flooding is not a major risk for the district.⁴⁶
- 10.86 In terms of water quality for the South and West Somerset management catchment, a number of rivers running through the district (Parratt and Brune and Axe) achieve good or better ecological or biological status.⁴⁷ The ecological status of rivers in South Somerset is generally moderate, with some small sections of both good and poor quality. The main

⁴³ Somerset County Council (2014) Local Flood Risk Management Strategy [online] available at: <http://www.somerset.gov.uk/EasySiteWeb/GatewayLink.aspx?allId=45896>

⁴⁴ Environment Agency (2016) South West River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan:

⁴⁵ Surface Water Management Plan for Yeovil 2019-2020

⁴⁶ Environment Agency (2009) Parrett Catchment Flood Management Plan [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/parrett-catchment-flood-management-plan>

⁴⁷ Environment Agency (2016) Water Body Status Classification South and West Somerset [online] available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/1afa239e-b61d-4f04-8c1c-13c880cdd4ee/water-body-status-classification-south-and-west-somerset>

reason in the Parrett catchment for not achieving good status is due to agricultural and rural land management. River quality in the south west of the district (River Axe) is considered to be poor.⁴⁸

10.87 The South West River Basin District, River Basin Management Plan (2018) describes the pressures facing the water environment and the actions that will address them, particularly in relation to water quality.⁴⁹ Whilst the spatial strategy will have implications for rivers running through the district, it is considered that mitigation available at the development management level could significantly reduce the potential for negative effects, and enhance the potential for development to deliver positive effects in terms of ecological quality enhancements in this area. The South West River Basin Management Plan (2018) sets out a broad range of measures to address physical pressures in this respect, and it will therefore also be important for development to provide SuDS to ensure that groundwater and/ or surface water quality supports or enhances the ecological and chemical quality of the rivers. Given the Groundwater Source Protection Zone's present within the district, notably within the Market Towns, it will also be important to ensure that it does not deteriorate the quality of groundwater resources.

10.88 Water supply and the abstraction, purification, and provision of potable water in South Somerset is managed by Wessex Water. Despite an overall increase in population, since the mid-1990s, the demand for water has been falling. While the scale of growth proposed through the Local Plan Review will inevitably increase pressures on water resources, it is considered that given the legal requirements in place for Water Resource Management Plans (WRMPs), overall, Wessex Water calculate that they have a surplus of water supply over demand for the next 25 years.⁵⁰

10.89 Although the majority of water that is abstracted (75% of which comes from groundwater sources) by Wessex Water is of a very good quality, there has been deterioration in recent years at some sources, particularly in relation to nitrate and pesticide concentrations at some sources. Wessex Water consider that, in many ways, issues around raw water quality currently represents a larger challenge to Wessex Water than water resource issues.⁵¹ In terms of the spatial strategy, it is considered through the Local Plan Review that the South Yeovil SUE should provide a new off-site sewer and new off-site mains. In addition, Pen Mill Sewage Treatment Works requires a detailed Strategic Enhancement Plan in order to inform future investment needs, with a treatment works scheme required in 2020-25 subject to growth and water quality objectives.

10.90 In terms of water supply and waste water, Wessex Water is upgrading the Chard Spine Main and off-site sewers. Wessex Water has also indicated a treatment works scheme may be required in the medium term, subject to growth and water quality objectives. The Local Plan Review highlights that a surface water feasibility study for the town is also currently programmed by Somerset County Council for 2019/20. Improvements to water mains and off-site sewers to serve allocated sites may need to be provided within agreed timescales, however it is considered that residual effects in this regard will likely be minor once mitigation is established.

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

10.91 Local Plan Review Policy EQ8 (Pollution Control) seeks to protect the water environment in the plan area. Policy EQ8 states that *"development proposals [...] will be supported where it can be demonstrated that they will not expose [...] water bodies, or other receptors to levels of potential contamination which give rise to unacceptable risks or harm to health or other adverse impacts."* This is further reiterated through Policy EQ1 (Addressing Climate Change

⁴⁸ Environment Agency (2016) Water Body Status Classification South and West Somerset [online] available at:

<https://data.gov.uk/dataset/1afa239e-b61d-4f04-8c1c-13c880cdd4ee/water-body-status-classification-south-and-west-somerset>

⁴⁹ Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and Environment Agency (2018) South West River Basin District, River Basin Management Plan [online] available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/south-west-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan>

⁵⁰ Wessex Water (2018) Wessex Water Draft Final Water Resources Management Plan [online] available at:

[https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/-/media/files/wessexwater/environment/wessex-water-draft-final-wrmp19-highlighted-changes_publicwebsite\(1\).pdf](https://www.wessexwater.co.uk/-/media/files/wessexwater/environment/wessex-water-draft-final-wrmp19-highlighted-changes_publicwebsite(1).pdf)

⁵¹ Ibid.

in South Somerset) which requires the design of new development to consider “*water efficiency*”.

- 10.92 Policy EQ1 is a key policy in terms of addressing flood risk. In line with Policy EQ1 the sequential test will be used to ensure new development takes place in the areas with the lowest probability of all forms of flooding and, where necessary, the exception test will be used. Where areas of flood risk cannot be avoided, Policy EQ1 states that “*development should reduce and manage the impact of flood risk by incorporating Sustainable Drainage Systems, and through appropriate layout, design, and choice of materials*”. Further to this, Policy EQ1 requires that the design of new development incorporate measures such as “*flood resilience*.”
- 10.93 The Council will work with developers, the Environment Agency and Somerset County Council (the Lead Local Flood Authority) to implement flood alleviation measures as set out in the SFRA (2008). Notably, The EA advise that the Hort Bridge Flood Alleviation scheme in Ilminster is programmed up to 2024/25.
- 10.94 Overall, the Local Plan Review policies seek to ensure that the risk of flooding is fully considered as part of new development proposals. While it is recognised that a number of watercourses flow through the district, it is also noted that fluvial flooding predominantly affects the Somerset Levels and Moors, although several settlements are also affected. The Local Plan Review requires that development take place, as far as possible, outside areas known to be at risk from flood risk or are required to provide appropriate mitigation and safeguards. In this context, the Council will work with the Environment Agency, developers and Somerset County Council (the Lead Local Flood Authority) to achieve sustainable local flood mitigation measures as part of development.
- 10.95 Policy HG6 (Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) sets out criteria to guide the location of sites, including requiring that “*The health and safety of occupants and visitors will not be at risk through unsafe access to sites, noise pollution or unacceptable flood risk*”.
- 10.96 It is recognised throughout the Local Plan Review that surface water flooding is also a constraint for the district, and as such development proposals must incorporate SuDS, which will achieve multiple flood risk benefits.
- 10.97 On balance, it is appropriate to conclude residual neutral effects at this stage, i.e. it is not possible to conclude positive or negative effects on the baseline.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

- 10.98 The River Parrett Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP) area covers most of South Somerset South Somerset, in addition to the River Axe CFMP, and the River Stour CFMP. These CFMP's will address cumulative effects of development within the CFMP areas; recommending ways of managing the risk now and over the next 50 to 100 years.
- 10.99 In terms of cumulative effects of new development in relation to surface water and fluvial flooding, that the provisions of the NPPF (2019, notably paragraphs 155 - 165) and measures and policy approaches implemented through the relevant plans and proposals will limit the significance of effects.
- 10.100 In this context, in accordance with the Somerset Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (2014) Somerset County Council (as Lead Local Flood Authority), and district councils must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development when carrying out flood risk management functions. The Strategy (2014) sets out the roles and responsibilities of the various authorities in terms of local flood risk. The Strategy defines seven objectives for management of local flood risk which will be delivered through a series of local measures and actions.

Soil and Land

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.101 The overall spatial strategy seeks to deliver the majority of growth within Principal Town of Yeovil, followed by the Primary Market Towns of Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster and Wincanton. This is supported by further growth within the Rural Centres, and limited growth in the Villages. Development will be restricted in Rural Settlements, in accordance with Policy SS4 (Development within Rural Settlements). The spatial strategy also seeks to focus employment growth in the main settlements; supporting economic growth primarily at Yeovil, followed by the Primary Market Towns. In addition, in recognition of the rural nature of the district, growth will be supported along the main transport corridors, maximising the potential of the A303 to facilitate economic growth.
- 10.102 The proposed delivery of housing and employment, as set out above, seeks to maximise the opportunities for infill and use of previously developed land to minimise impact on the environment and support sustainable development. This includes capitalising upon opportunities to reuse vacant sites at Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton where town centre regeneration is a priority. This will lead to long-term positive effects in relation to the efficient use of land; while also bringing positive change to the town centres, maximising the allocation potential given their role within the settlement hierarchy.
- 10.103 It is also recognised that the development of the Crewkerne Key Site is another area of regeneration proposed through the spatial strategy, and will therefore utilise existing brownfield land within the district. It is noted that this site is also saved as a strategic employment site (Local Plan Allocation KS/CREW/1).
- 10.104 A large proportion of growth is focussed at the two Yeovil SUEs, which have also been carried forward from the previous Local Plan. The delivery of the SUEs will inevitably result in the significant loss of greenfield land and Grade 1, 2 and 3a Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land, with the potential for significant permanent negative effects on soil resources. Notably, almost the entirety of the South Yeovil SUE is located on Grade 1 BMV land.
- 10.105 The majority of the land in the district outside of the settlements is Grade 3 BMV agricultural land, with a number of allocations located on BMV land. As such, the delivery of the spatial strategy is likely to lead to further incremental loss of this soil resource with the potential for permanent negative effects.

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

- 10.106 Whilst the spatial strategy will inevitably lead to significant negative effects on soil resources as a result of the permanent loss of high quality agricultural land, the Local Plan Review seeks to minimise any further effects on agricultural land resources. In particular, Policy SS4 (Development in Rural Settlements) requires that within rural settlements, *“development must be located within or adjacent to the existing built settlement, be commensurate with the scale and character of the settlement.”* Further to this Policy SS1 (Settlement Strategy) provides a level of protection to the countryside through requiring that *“development within and outside of Rural Settlements where Policy SS4 does not apply will be limited to that for which a countryside location is essential”*.
- 10.107 The Local Plan Review states that isolated new homes in the countryside will be resisted unless the special circumstances set out in the NPPF (2019) and Policies HG7 (Replacement Dwellings in the Countryside and HG8 (Housing for Agricultural Workers) are met. In this context, Policy HG7 permits extensions to existing dwellings in the countryside only where *“the extension does not result in a dwelling that is disproportionate to the scale of the original dwelling and the size and design of the extension are appropriate to the landscape character of the location.”*
- 10.108 The Local Plan Review further states that *“when proposing a non-agriculture related greenfield development for business or community use in a countryside location, which is*

away from an existing settlement; applicants will be expected to justify why that location is essential.” Further to this, “applicants will also be expected have first explored opportunities of previously developed land or through the conversion of existing agricultural buildings elsewhere in the district.”

- 10.109 Further references are made throughout the Local Plan Review to encourage the use of previously developed land; notably within the spatial strategy at Yeovil (Policy TC1), Chard (Policy TC3) and Wincanton (Wincanton Regeneration Strategy, 2019), where Town Centre regeneration is a priority. While there is no specific policy which relates to the use of previously developed land; this is adequately addressed by the NPPF (2019, paragraph 84).
- 10.110 Whilst focused redevelopment of brownfield sites and town centre regeneration will support the delivery of positive effects with regards to the efficient use of land, it is still anticipated overall that the spatial strategy proposed through the Local Plan Review will lead to residual significant negative effects. This is resulting from significant losses of greenfield land and agricultural land (including best and most versatile agricultural land) particularly significant within the SUEs.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

- 10.111 Development proposed through the Local Plan Review has the potential to interact with development proposed through other plans to have a cumulative effect on this SA objective. This is most likely to arise through the incremental loss of greenfield and agricultural land on the edge of existing settlements as well as the delivery of large-scale development such as the Yeovil SUE's (notably the South Yeovil SUE being located on Grade 1 BMV land). While Local Planning Authorities can try and direct development to areas of lower agricultural land quality, this is not always possible. Given the rural nature of the district, it is considered that it will still retain an overall high level of high-quality agricultural land resources.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.112 South Somerset has many areas that are recognised for their biodiversity and geodiversity value. Parts of the Somerset Levels and Moors in the north of the District are internationally designated as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site for wetland habitat attracting extensive bird populations. There are also four National Nature Reserves and 39 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). The vast majority of SSSIs in Somerset are in a 'favourable' or 'unfavourable – recovering' condition. At the local level there are also nearly 600 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and five Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), as well as occurrences of protected species and an abundance of habitats and species of 'principal importance'.
- 10.113 The growth strategy proposed through the Local Plan Review seeks to maximise levels of self-containment by directing growth to existing settlement areas and existing areas of planned growth carried forward from the previous Local Plan. As the Principal Town Yeovil is the main focus for development in South Somerset. The town contains limited designated biodiversity areas, though it is largely surrounded in the south and west by designated LWS and priority habitats are dispersed through the surrounding countryside.
- 10.114 The proposed site allocations within Yeovil include two SUEs rolled forward from the previous Local Plan. The Southern SUE contains deciduous woodland priority habitat and lies near the large Barwick Park LWS (though it is recognised that the site is segregated by physical infrastructure - the A37). The Southern SUE is proposed to be extended to include further land to the south (site YV3) adjacent to the A37, and this is considered likely to exacerbate minor negative effects in relation to disturbance at this site.
- 10.115 Two further extensions are proposed to the Brimsmore site in the north of Yeovil (YV2 and YV4), as well as an extension in the west of the Northern SUE (YV5). The extensions to development in these areas will not result in the direct loss of any habitats and is not considered likely to lead to any significant negative effects for biodiversity. Similarly, the

proposed town centre sites (YV6, YV7 and YV8) do not contain and are not located near to any designated biodiversity sites or important habitats and are not considered likely to lead to any significant negative effects for biodiversity.

- 10.116 Housing and employment development sites are proposed in the west of the town around Lynx Trading Estate (sites YV9 and EP1) and in the vicinity of Dry Copse LWS, Rookery LWS and Yew Tree Close LWS as well as deciduous woodland priority habitats. Development in this area is considered to have the potential for minor negative effects, predominantly due to disturbance, noise, light and air pollution. It is also considered that biodiversity enhancements at the proposed housing site YV9 could support and improve the ecological connections between the designated sites and deliver minor positive effects in this respect.
- 10.117 Finally within Yeovil, further employment growth is also proposed in the north-west at Lufton Trading Estate. Whilst the site (EP1) does not contain any designated biodiversity it lies adjacent to deciduous woodland priority habitats and presents the opportunity to connect these habitats in the south-west of the development site. Such biodiversity enhancements are recommended to realise benefits for biodiversity and deliver minor positive effects.
- 10.118 In the smaller settlements where further growth is proposed, the development proposed at Langport and Huish Episcopi is located in close proximity to Langport Railway Cutting SSSI, and the LWS (Langport Moor, North Street Moor, Hay Moor and Muchelney Level) that connect to the Somerset Levels and Moors. Potential effects arising on European designated sites are considered through the HRA that accompanies the Local Plan Review and summarised in following section, and in terms of the SSSI and LWS, it is considered that development has the potential for minor negative effects as a result of increased disturbance, noise, light and air pollution. Mitigation, particularly during construction will be required to reduce the extent of the potential effects.
- 10.119 Provisions are also made in Primary Market Towns and Local Market Towns for continued housing and employment development. Potential negative effects resulting from this development are anticipated to be minor in nature and predominantly relate to the potential for habitat loss, disturbance and noise, light and air pollution. Housing development proposed within Crewkerne is anticipated to lead to minor long-term negative effects for Kithill LWS as the proposed development sites largely enclose the LWS on three sides (sites CR1, CR3 and CR4).
- 10.120 Of note, the development proposed around Chard encircles the settlement area and presents significant opportunities for habitat enhancements and enhanced ecological connectivity between the main LWS adjoining the development sites (Chard Reservoir and Chard Railway Fields Complex).
- 10.121 Further lower levels of growth are proposed within Rural Centres and Villages and with the exception of the sites at North Cadbury, none of these development locations contain or are near to any designated biodiversity or priority habitat. As such, these growth locations are not anticipated to lead to any significant effects. Employment development at the North Cadbury sites (RD1 and RD2) have the potential to result in direct habitat loss (traditional orchards) and minor long-term negative effects in this respect.

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

- 10.122 The HRA accompanying the Local Plan Review has identified potential impact pathways where development may result in adverse effects on designated European sites for biodiversity. The HRA identifies potential adverse effects on water quality affecting the integrity of the River Axe SAC due to treated sewage potentially resulting in excess phosphorus loading in the river. Recommendations are made in the HRA to extend policy wording to ensure that appropriate infrastructure requirements are in place prior to development which, if included, should mitigate the potential adverse effects.
- 10.123 Further adverse effects on the integrity of the Somerset Levels and Moors SPA/ Ramsar are identified due to increased surface water run-off rates associated with the impermeable surfaces in urban environments and high sensitivity of the SPA/ Ramsar to changes in water levels. The HRA recommends additional policy wording to require the use of Sustainable

Drainage Systems ensuring no net increase of peak run-off rates from all urban surfaces beyond that of the greenfield runoff rates; and, if included, this protective policy mechanism should mitigate the identified effects. In terms of adverse effects for the Somerset Levels and Moors the HRA also highlights the implications arising due to some of the land parcels allocated for development potentially being used as functionally linked land by some of the SPA birds. Again, extended policy protections are recommended requiring survey evidence in applications to determine the habitats and current site use *“to verify if the land parcel is indeed suitable for supporting a significant population of designated bird species. Where habitats are suitable, non-breeding bird surveys will be required to determine if the site and neighbouring land constitute a significant area of supporting habitat. Bird surveys will need to be undertaken during autumn, winter and spring.”* The extended recommended policy protections are considered likely to mitigate the potential adverse effects.

- 10.124 The HRA also recommends overall that air quality and transport modelling is undertaken to the key transport nodes identified in the HRA to inform the Appropriate Assessment of the Regulation 19 version of the Plan.
- 10.125 With regards to local biodiversity, an abundance of priority habitats are dispersed throughout the Plan area, and many of these are locally designated LWS. These locally designated sites and important habitats are those most vulnerable to development as outlined by the potential effects of the spatial strategy above.
- 10.126 The NPPF and Governments 25-year Environmental Plan outlines the strategic ambitions for biodiversity in England, providing high-level protections for designated sites. Paragraph 174 of the NPPF identifies that local plans should *“promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species”* as well as *“identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity”*.
- 10.127 In this respect, the Local Plan Review provides Policy EQ5 to protect local, regional, national and international sites, as well as sites of geological interest. The policy requires development to *“protect the biodiversity value of land and buildings and minimise fragmentation of habitats and promote coherent ecological networks”* as well as *“maximise opportunities for restoration, enhancement and connection of natural habitats”*. The policy asserts a strict requirement that *“development must not risk the integrity of internationally, nationally or locally designated wildlife sites”*. Where there is a reasonable likelihood of the presence of protected and priority species the policy requires survey and impact assessment that prioritises avoidance over mitigation or compensation.
- 10.128 The supporting text recognises the pressures on biodiversity in light of climate change and promotes ecological connectivity in response to this. The spatial strategy has also highlighted opportunities for enhancements to ecological connectivity, and the policy framework is supportive of ensuring that these opportunities are realised in development.
- 10.129 Extended policy protection recommendations are made through the HRA and the SEA supports the recommendations as measures to ensure that the development proposed through the Local Plan Review will not result in significant negative effects on biodiversity. Alongside this, there is an abundance of priority habitats and these habitats are placed under pressure with the growth proposed through the Local Plan Review. Whilst opportunities for positive enhancements have been identified through the appraisal, given the potential for increased disturbance, pollution, and fragmentation, an overall minor negative effect is anticipated at this stage, the significance of which would increase without the uptake of the HRA recommendations for policy amendments.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

- 10.130 Within the plan itself (intra-plan), cumulatively the delivery of growth may impact upon designated and undesignated biodiversity, and overall ecological connectivity. The HRA identifies policy protection recommendations that will reduce the potential for significant cumulative negative effects on European designated biodiversity sites and the SEA supports the identified recommendations.

- 10.131 Development proposed through the Local Plan Review has the potential to interact with development proposed through other plans, particularly neighbouring authorities' development plans, to have a cumulative effect on this SA theme. Key sensitive sites such as the Somerset Levels and Moors extend beyond the South Somerset District boundary and as such are influenced by growth in the surrounding areas in combination with the growth proposed in South Somerset. Similarly, the growth proposed in South Somerset may affect biodiversity in the surrounding areas, in particular key sensitive sites such as Bracket's Coppice Special Area of Conservation 1.5km from the District boundary. The cumulative effects on sensitive species and habitats, environmental pathways and ecological corridors should be considered from the outset of plan-making.

Landscape and Townscape

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.132 South Somerset is a large, rural district, with its population distributed mainly across a few key market towns, several smaller towns, and numerous villages. The landscape and topography across the Plan area vary, with landforms of wide clay vales or rolling lowland and occasional hilly outcrops of limestone. Parts of South Somerset are nationally recognised landscapes, including The Blackdown Hills AONB in the west of the Plan area, and the Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB in the eastern fringes. In addition, the Dorset AONB runs along the southern boundary of South Somerset, from the south of Chard to the south of Yeovil. The rural landscape character of the Plan area includes important ridges, large areas of flat land, far-reaching views and high levels of tranquillity. SA Scoping also notes that the loss of agricultural land is changing the landscape character of the Plan area.
- 10.133 The spatial strategy seeks to maximise levels of self-containment, and Policy SS1 directs most growth to the Principal Town Yeovil, followed by the Primary and Local Market Towns. Small-scale growth is also proposed within Rural Centres and Villages. On this basis, with the key towns of Yeovil, Crewkerne, Chard and Ilminster located in the south of the Plan area, much of the proposed growth will occur west of the Blackdown Hills AONB and north of the Dorset AONB. Whilst the spatial strategy avoids development directly within the AONB, the proposed sites will ultimately change the landscape setting of the AONBs to some degree and both positive and negative effects are anticipated. Negative effects are ultimately anticipated due to a loss of greenfield and high-quality agricultural land affecting local landscape character, and these effects are most prominent within Yeovil at the SUEs, and their proposed extensions. Given the topography of the Plan area, development in the east of Chard is also considered likely to affect views from the AONB. Further potential negative effects and potential positive effects are dependent upon the delivery of high-quality design and efficient layout and orientation - these aspects are largely guided by policy directions and ultimately the potential effects remain uncertain until lower level site proposals are submitted and assessed.
- 10.134 For the majority of the settlements, the landscape capacity study has identified higher capacity to accommodate development at small sites on the settlement edge, but most of the land surrounding the settlements was found overall to have a medium to low capacity to accommodate development/ change. The spatial strategy has sought to maximise use of areas found to have higher capacity, utilising smaller sites as the settlement edge where possible and largely avoiding significant negative effects in this respect. However, some growth is proposed within areas found to be of medium to low capacity for change, and this is most prominent in the settlements of Yeovil and Ansford/Castle Cary.
- 10.135 Within Yeovil, further development proposed in the north-west of the settlement around the Brimsmore Key Site is largely located in areas of medium to low capacity and given the size of these sites (YV2 for 200 dwellings and YV4 for 200 dwellings) development is likely to impact upon landscape character in an area of higher constraint. However, it is recognised that the landscape sensitivity work was carried out before the Brimsmore Key Site has been built out. As a result, the landscape sensitivity is likely to change.

- 10.136 Within Ansford and Castle Cary further development is proposed in the north-west of the settlement adjoining the existing sites with planning permission. This will build out the entire stretch of land between Lower Ansford and Torbay Road Industrial Estate and significantly alter the townscape and landscape character in this area.
- 10.137 Alternatively, the brownfield development proposed through the spatial strategy, particularly that proposed within Yeovil Town Centre (TC1) is likely to deliver minor positive effects for the townscape through improvements to the overall quality of the built environment.

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

- 10.138 Whilst the spatial strategy avoids development in locations likely to significantly impact upon key protected landscapes, the scale of development across the district, including at the SUEs is likely to impact upon the rural character of the district to some degree. Addressing this issue, the Local Plan includes Policy EQ4 requiring development proposals to consider “*the local distinctiveness and the main characteristics of each landscape character area*”, and favour “*the conservation of natural beauty*”. This includes requirements to conserve and enhance important views, scenic quality, and distinctive landscape features.
- 10.139 The Local Plan seeks to protect the wider setting by limiting development in the countryside to that for which a countryside location is essential (Policy SS1). Policy EQ2 (General Development and Design) will also support the delivery of high-quality design standards that will contribute to mitigating the potential negative effects arising for landscapes and landscape character. In this respect, Policy EQ2 identifies that “*Development will be designed to achieve high quality buildings and places which promote South Somerset’s local distinctiveness and preserves or enhances the character and appearance of the District.*” Criteria for development standards include adding “*to the overall quality of South Somerset*”, ensuring development is “*visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping*”, and being “*sympathetic to the local character and history of South Somerset, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting*”.
- 10.140 The spatial strategy proposes development in the setting of the AONB and in the vicinity of protected sites for bird species, and in this respect the landscapes of South Somerset are valued by people and nature alike with intrinsic links between biodiversity and landscapes. Whilst no significant negative effects are anticipated at this stage, it recognised that policy protections could be extended to minimise the impact of lighting on intrinsically dark landscapes and protect areas of tranquillity.
- 10.141 Overall, the proposed spatial strategy is likely to have a negative effect on the landscape, particularly rural character in the areas where the SUEs and large-scale development are proposed. Local Plan Review policies seek to ensure that development retains and enhances the key landscape areas, and the overall landscape character and rural setting, to reduce the extent and significance of the inevitable effects of the required growth. Despite this, it is predicted that the Local Plan Review has the potential for a residual minor negative effect on the landscape.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

- 10.142 Development proposed through the Local Plan has the potential to interact with development proposed through other plans to have a cumulative effect on the landscape. This is most likely to arise through the incremental loss of greenfield sites on the edge of existing settlements as well as the delivery of large-scale development such as the SUEs. Ultimately the nature and significance of effects will be dependent on the design/ layout or development and the implementation of mitigation measures. It will be important for Local Planning Authorities to work closely with each other as well as Natural England to try and plan at a landscape scale, minimise potential impacts as well as identify opportunities to deliver improvements where possible.

Historic Environment

Appraisal of the spatial strategy

- 10.143 The historic environment is a valuable part of South Somerset's cultural heritage and contributes significantly to the local economy and identity of the district, adding to the quality of life and well-being of residents and visitors. Within the Plan area there are over 4,600 Listed Building list entries, over 80 Conservation Areas, 14 Historic Parks and Gardens, a Registered Battlefield, 70 scheduled monuments, and other archaeological sites - including areas identified as being of 'High Archaeological Potential'.
- 10.144 The spatial strategy seeks to maximise levels of self-containment, and Policy SS1 directs most growth to the Principal Town Yeovil, followed by the Primary and Local Market Towns. Smaller growth is also proposed within Rural Centres and Villages.
- 10.145 As the main location for growth, Yeovil's local historic environment has the potential to be affected, both by growth proposed within the settlement, and at the settlement edge. Within the town centre, existing allocations within and surrounding the Town Centre Conservation Area are carried forward (in line with the 'Yeovil Town Centre Refresh' development strategy) with further sites (YV6 and YV8) proposed, expanding development north of the A30. The development proposed within and surrounding the Conservation Area has the potential for both positive and negative effects for the historic environment, which is largely influenced by factors such as design and layout. The redevelopment of brownfield sites has good potential for positive townscape improvements.
- 10.146 The proposed extension to the Brimsmore Site (YV2) will increase development in the immediate vicinity of Thorne Conservation Area. This development in-combination with the proposals for the Brimsmore Key Site will deliver significant levels of development in this area and change the character of the land surrounding the Conservation Area.
- 10.147 Outside of the Town Centre, the Southern SUE and proposed extension site YV3 are located near to the Registered Barwick Park and adjacent to the Scheduled Monument and archaeological site 'Roman village North of Dunnock's Lane. Large-scale development in this area is likely to affect the historic landscape setting to some degree and is likely to require archaeological investigation prior to any development.
- 10.148 Within Crewkerne the majority of the town centre is covered by Conservation Area status and includes over 140 Listed Buildings. Housing and employment sites (CR2, CR4, CR5 and EP1) are proposed directly adjacent to Crewkerne Conservation Area where development is likely to affect the setting of designated heritage assets to some degree and responsive design mitigation will be required. This is considered alongside significant development in the east and south of the town which will ultimately change the overall townscape and rural landscape setting to some degree.
- 10.149 Within Ansford and Castle Cary the housing development sites carried forward from the previous plan are located in areas of constraint with regards to the historic environment. Site HG/ANSF/1 is located within the Ansford Conservation Area and HG/CACA/2 is located adjacent to Higher Flax Mills Conservation Area. Both sites will require responsive design mitigation to minimise the potential for long-term negative effects. This is again considered alongside significant development in the north of the settlement which will ultimately change the townscape character and affect the wider rural setting.
- 10.150 Within Ilminster the historic layout and rich building styles which are prominent in the town centre, and dominated by the Minster and its tower, form part of the Conservation Area designated in 1973. Development site IM2 in the east of the settlement is located adjacent to Ilminster Conservation Area at the foot of Pretwood Hill. Development in this location is likely to require responsive design mitigation to avoid negative effects arising, and should ensure that any existing important views into and out of the settlement are retained.
- 10.151 Further to this, development proposed in Martock and Bower Hinton will build out a stretch of land in the north-west of the settlement, with site MB3 in close vicinity of Martock and Bower

Hinton Conservation Area, again responsive design mitigation will be required to reduce the extent of the potential negative effects.

- 10.152 The remainder of the proposed development sites are located away from designated Conservation Areas and potential effects arising relate primarily to development within the vicinity of Listed Buildings. Mitigation, including requirements for high-quality and responsive design should ensure these potential effects are not significant, and opportunities for positive townscape enhancements should be encouraged.

Appraisal of the Plan as a whole

- 10.153 The spatial strategy largely seeks to avoid significant negative effects and alongside this, the Local Plan Review proposes policies that support and guide development to minimise its impact on the historic environment and maximise opportunities for enhancements.
- 10.154 The potential negative effects arising from the spatial strategy primarily relate to significant growth within and surrounding Yeovil and Ansford and Castle Cary. The development proposed within these settlements has greater potential to affect heritage designations, as well as the wider historic settlement character and historic landscape form.
- 10.155 With regards to the development proposed within Yeovil Town Centre as part of the 'Yeovil Town Centre Refresh' development strategy, key brownfield sites form the basis of a regeneration strategy to improve the overall quality and function of the sites and town centre. Policy TC2 identifies that priorities for development include "*very high standards of urban design and use of materials*", and "*contributions to a significantly improved public realm*" – measures which are likely to realise minor positive effects for the historic environment by means of improved environmental quality and user experience, and improvements to accessibility and legibility.
- 10.156 Development is also guided by Policy EQ3 which seeks to provide protections for heritage assets, identified by the supporting text as formed of both designated assets, archaeological sites, and other assets that "*contribute positively to the significance of the historic environment*". Whilst recognising the need to protect these assets the policy promotes appropriate enhancements and seeks to maximise the potential for the historic environment to "*contribute towards the economy, tourism, education and local identity*". Development is expected to "*make a positive contribution*" to the character of the historic environment "*through high standards of design which reflect and complement it and through the use of appropriate materials and techniques*" and ensuring that alterations in the built environment are "*balanced alongside the need to retain the integrity of the historic environment*".
- 10.157 The supporting text for Policy EQ3 further identifies that all new development should have regard to the Historic Environment Strategy being produced by the Council (currently in draft form), which provides detailed advice on the general principles for development in relation to the management, conservation and enhancement of the historic environment including archaeological sites.
- 10.158 Overall, whilst development proposed through the Local Plan Review will inevitably change the landscape and townscapes of areas within South Somerset, the Local Plan policies and supporting Historic Environment Strategy seek to ensure that development retains and enhances the significance of the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings (including designated and non-designated sites). This is also considered alongside the proposed access and infrastructure improvements, as well as public realm enhancements and the delivery of new open spaces which will indirectly positively contribute to the historic environment by means of delivering a high-quality built environment. Protection is also provided to ensure that development appropriately considers archaeology as a prominent historic asset within the district. The policies are likely to reduce the extent of the negative effects identified, however the overall impact remains uncertain at this stage as it is ultimately dependent on successful design, layout and integration. Overall, it is likely that development will lead to a residual minor negative effect given the scale of growth proposed within a rural historic setting, as well as minor positive effects as a result of regeneration efforts focused within Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton Town Centres.

Appraisal of cumulative effects

10.159 There is the potential for a significant cumulative loss of greenfield land as a result of the distribution of housing to meet the identified housing needs across the Plan area and this may cumulatively affect the wider historic environment setting. The spatial strategy also has the potential to affect rural heritage settings and designations outside of the Plan area boundary, particularly in the south where the main growth towns of Yeovil, Crewkerne, and Chard are located relatively close to the Plan area boundary, and the designated landscapes and Registered Parks and Gardens of neighbouring authority areas.

Summary of the appraisal

Table 10.1: Summary appraisal findings

SA objective	Likely residual effect	Commentary
Communities (including housing)	Significant positive effect	Overall, significant long-term positive effects are anticipated as a result of the spatial strategy identifying land to meet the forecasted housing and economic development needs of all the communities within South Somerset. The spatial strategy is considered likely to support reductions in existing inequalities with a focus on improving self-containment, town centre regeneration proposals in Yeovil, and net gains in community service and facility provisions overall. This is supported by the policy framework which seeks to ensure development delivers an appropriate balance of housing types, sizes and tenures.
Economy and employment	Significant positive effect	Overall, long-term significant positive effects are anticipated given the identification of new employment land and expected delivery of new jobs, supporting the economic vitality and viability of the district. In line with the FEMA analysis (2017) considerable focus is placed on the future economic role and function of Yeovil and the A303 corridor, and to address existing viability issues this is delivered alongside focused regeneration at Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton Town Centres. Given evidence indicating that expansion, intensification and change of use have historically provided relatively high levels of net additional floorspace, this approach is also supported by the proposed policy framework. The Local Plan Review also recognises the role of agri-businesses and tourism in South Somerset and provides support for rural diversification and further growth of the tourism economy. The multifaceted approach to supporting and sustaining economic vitality and viability is likely to realise significant benefits in the long-term.
Health and equalities	Significant positive effect	Overall, the delivery of the Local Plan Review will benefit residents through providing housing, employment, infrastructure, facilities, and services as set out within the IDP (2015/2016). Positive effects on the district's main settlement are also anticipated through the delivery of Policy TC1 (Yeovil Town Centre Regeneration Sites), Policy TC2 (Development in the Designated Yeovil Town Centre) and TC3 (Chard Town Centre Regeneration Site). The regeneration sites will be underpinned by high quality urban design and placemaking principles; strengthening the roles of the centres as vibrant, attractive environments which promote self-containment. On balance, it is appropriate to conclude that the Local Plan Review would have significant positive long-term effects in terms of improving the health and wellbeing of residents and reducing inequalities.
Transport and movement	Minor negative effect	On balance, while it is considered that the impact of proposed development on the transport network is likely to be mitigated to some extent, given the rural nature of the district there is still likely to be some residual minor long term negative effects against this SA Theme, i.e. in terms of accessibility and encouraging the use of sustainable travel.

SA objective	Likely residual effect	Commentary
Energy and climate change	Minor negative effect	On balance, while there is the potential for both positive and negative effects, the overall level of growth proposed through the Local Plan is likely to lead to a residual minor negative effect on the Climate Change and Energy SA theme, predominantly as a result of increased pressures on infrastructure affecting per capita emissions.
Water resources, quality and flooding	Neutral effect	The appraisal has identified numerous implications arising from the spatial strategy proposed in the Local Plan Review including a need for extensive flood mitigation schemes in some allocated sites prior to development. The policy framework provides a solid basis for protection and should manage potential impacts arising in relation to flood risk and water resources and recognises the need for close consultation and collaboration with relevant water stakeholders. On balance, it is appropriate to conclude residual neutral effects at this stage, i.e. it is not possible to conclude positive or negative effects on the baseline.
Soil and land	Significant negative effect	Whilst focused redevelopment of brownfield sites and town centre regeneration will support the delivery of positive effects with regards to the efficient use of land, it is still anticipated overall that the spatial strategy proposed through the Local Plan Review will lead to residual significant negative effects. This is resulting from significant losses of greenfield land and agricultural land (including best and most versatile agricultural land) particularly significant within the SUEs.
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Minor negative effect	Overall, the spatial strategy avoids development that may significantly affect designated biodiversity, performing positively in this respect. Despite this, there is an abundance of priority habitats and these habitats are placed under pressure with the growth proposed through the Local Plan Review. Whilst opportunities for positive enhancements have been identified through the appraisal, given the potential for increased disturbance, pollution, and fragmentation, an overall minor negative effect is anticipated at this stage.
Landscape and townscape	Minor negative effect	Overall, the proposed spatial strategy is likely to have a negative effect on the landscape, particularly rural character in the areas where the SUEs and large-scale development are proposed. Local Plan policies seek to ensure that development retains and enhances the key landscape areas, and the overall landscape character and rural setting, to reduce the extent and significance of the inevitable effects of the required growth. Despite this, it is predicted that the Local Plan has the potential for a residual minor negative effect on the landscape, primarily from areas of larger scale growth.
Historic environment	Minor negative effect	Overall, whilst development proposed through the Local Plan Review will inevitably change the landscape and townscapes of areas within South Somerset, the Local Plan policies and supporting Historic Environment Strategy seek to ensure that development retains and enhances the significance of the historic environment and heritage assets and their settings (including designated and non-designated sites). This is also considered alongside the proposed access and infrastructure improvements, as well as public realm enhancements and the delivery of new open spaces which will indirectly positively contribute to the historic environment by means of delivering a high-quality built environment. Protection is also provided to ensure that development appropriately considers archaeology as a prominent historic asset within the district. The policies are likely to reduce the extent of the negative effects identified, however the overall impact remains uncertain at this stage as it is ultimately dependent on successful design, layout and integration. Overall, it is likely that development will lead to a residual minor negative effect given the scale of growth proposed within a rural historic setting, as

SA objective	Likely residual effect	Commentary
		well as minor positive effects as a result of regeneration efforts focused within Yeovil Town Centre.
10.160		Overall the spatial strategy and policy framework is considered likely to lead to both positive and negative effects with regards to the SA objectives.
10.161		Significant positive effects are considered likely for SA objective relating to communities, primarily as result of identifying land to meet identified housing needs, providing and maintaining a 5-year housing land supply, and delivering an appropriate balance of housing types, sizes and tenures, including affordable housing in line with affordable housing needs evidenced in the SHMA. The spatial strategy further identifies employment sites which will contribute to meeting the forecasted increase in the total number of jobs in the FEMA over the plan period, supporting the economic vitality and viability of the district and delivering minor positive effects in this respect.
10.162		Town centre regeneration in Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton will also support the delivery of significant positive effects, retaining and enhancing the service roles of these areas and maximising levels of self-containment. The development proposed through the spatial strategy is anticipated to reduce inequalities and support health and wellbeing, delivering significant positive effects in this respect. The spatial strategy targets areas of higher deprivation within Yeovil, Chard, Crewkerne, Ilton and Martock and Bower Hinton, and an overall net gain in community service and facility provisions and open/ green spaces is anticipated.
10.163		Growth is targeted within existing settlements which will be a focus for sustainable transport and infrastructure improvements, however, given the level of growth proposed and rural nature of the plan area, residual minor long-term negative effects are anticipated overall in relation to transport and movement, and climate change and energy.
10.164		Whilst the potential for both positive and negative effects for water resources and water quality are identified, it is anticipated overall that a residual neutral effect on the baseline can be achieved.
10.165		The most dominant and significant negative effects ultimately relate to the loss of greenfield land and high-quality agricultural land within the Plan area, with many greenfield sites allocated in the Local Plan Review. This will significantly affect the SA objective for land and soil, and residual minor negative effects are also anticipated with regards to landscape character and historic landscapes in this respect.
10.166		One recommendation is made with respect to policy provisions, seeking enhanced protections for intrinsically dark skies and areas of tranquillity.

Part 3: What are the next steps?

11. Next steps and monitoring

Introduction (to Part 3)

11.1 The aim of this chapter is to explain next steps in the plan-making/ SA process.

Next steps

- 11.2 This Interim SA Report will accompany the Preferred Options document for public consultation in June 2019. Any comments received will be reviewed and then taken into account as part of the iterative plan-making and SA process.
- 11.3 The representations received along with further evidence base work, including further SA work, will inform the development of the Publication Plan (Regulation 19), which is scheduled to be published for consultation in 2020. An updated SA Report will accompany the Publication Plan for consultation.

Monitoring

- 11.4 Monitoring measures will be established within the final SA Report to address the potential significant effects associated with the Regulation 19 version of the plan. No measures have been identified at this stage, as the Plan is yet to be finalised.

Appendices

Appendix I: Regulatory compliance

As discussed in Chapter 1 above, Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans Regulations 2004 explains the information that must be contained in the SA Report; however, interpretation of Schedule 2 is not straightforward. Table IA links the structure of this report to an interpretation of Schedule 2 requirements, whilst Table IB explains this interpretation.

Table IA: Questions answered by the SA Report, in accordance with an interpretation of regulatory requirements

Questions answered		As per the regulations...the SA Report must include...
Introduction	What's the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes
	What's the SA scope?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
	What's the sustainability 'context'?	
	What's the sustainability 'baseline'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
	What are the key issues and objectives that should be a focus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment
Part 1	What has plan-making / SA involved up to this point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach) The likely significant effects associated with alternatives Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives assessment / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the Plan
Part 2	What are the SA findings at this current stage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the Submission Plan The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the Submission Plan
Part 3	What happens next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A description of the monitoring measures envisaged

Table IB: Questions answered by the SA Report, in accordance with regulatory requirements

Schedule 2	Interpretation of Schedule 2		
The report must include...	The report must include...		
1. an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	i.e. answer - <i>What's the plan seeking to achieve?</i>	
2. the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'context'?</i>	i.e. answer – <i>What's the scope of the SA?</i>
3. the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level		
4. any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan'	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'baseline'?</i>	
5. the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected		
6. the likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - <i>What are the key issues & objectives?</i>	
7. the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan;	Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of appraisal		
8. an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information	An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (i.e. an explanation of the 'reasonableness of the approach')	i.e. answer - <i>What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?</i> [Part 1 of the Report]	
9. a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.	The likely significant effects associated with alternatives, including on issues such as... ... and an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives considered / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.		
	The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan	i.e. answer - <i>What are the assessment findings at this current stage?</i> [Part 2 of the Report]	
	The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan		
	A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring	i.e. answer - <i>What happens next?</i> [Part 3 of the Report]	

Whilst Tables A and B signpost broadly how/where this report presents the information required of the SA Report by the Regulations, as a supplement it is also helpful to present a discussion of more precisely how/where regulatory requirements are met - see Table IC.

Table IC: 'Checklist' of how (throughout the SA process) and where (within this report) regulatory requirements have been, are and will be met.

Regulatory requirement	Discussion of how requirement is met
Schedule 2 of the regulations lists the information to be provided within the SA Report	
1. An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	Chapter 2 ('What's the plan seeking to achieve') presents this information. The relationship with other plans and programmes is also set out in Appendix II (Scoping Information).
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;	These matters were considered in detail at the scoping stage, which included consultation on a Scoping Report published in 2015.
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	The outcome of scoping was an 'SA Framework', and this is presented within Chapter 3 ('What's the scope of the SA').
4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.;	More detailed messages from the Scoping Report - i.e. messages established through context and baseline review - are presented within Appendix II.
5. The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	The Scoping Report (2017) presents a detailed context review, and explains how key messages from the context review (and baseline review) were then refined in order to establish an 'SA framework'. A summary is provided in Appendix II of this SA Report. The context review informed the development of the SA framework and topics, presented in Chapter 3, which have been used to Taken together, which provide a methodological 'framework' for appraisal. With regards to explaining "how... considerations have been taken into account" - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapters 5 and 6 explains how reasonable alternatives were established in 2019 in-light of earlier consultation/SA. • Chapter 7 sets out the summary findings of the appraisal of the reasonable alternatives, with the detailed appraisal provided in Appendix V. • Chapter 8 explains the Council's 'reasons for supporting the preferred approach', i.e. explains how/why the preferred approach is justified in-light of alternatives appraisal (and other factors). • Chapter 10 sets out the findings of the appraisal of the draft plan.
6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects);	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapter 7 sets out the summary findings of the appraisal of the reasonable alternatives (in relation to the spatial strategy, which is the 'stand-out' plan issue and hence that which should be the focus of alternatives appraisal/ consultation), with the detailed appraisal provided in Appendix IV. • Chapter 10 presents the draft plan appraisal. As explained within the various methodology sections, as part of appraisal work, consideration has been given to the SA scope, and the need to consider the potential for various effect characteristics/dimensions.
7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	Where necessary, mitigation measures are identified within the appraisal (in Chapter 7 and Appendix V) and appraisal of the Local Plan (Chapter 10).
8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of	Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 deal with 'Reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with', in that there is an

know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	<p>explanation of the reasons for focusing on particular issues and options.</p> <p>Also, Chapter 8 explains the Council's 'reasons for selecting the preferred option' (in light of alternatives appraisal).</p> <p>Methodology is discussed at various places, ahead of presenting appraisal findings, and limitations/assumptions are also discussed as part of appraisal narratives.</p>
9. Description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Art. 10;	Measures envisaged concerning monitoring will be set out in the SA Report that accompanies the Regulation 19 Plan on consultation.
10. A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	The NTS is provided in a separate document.
The SA Report must be published alongside the Draft Plan, in accordance with the following regulations	
authorities with environmental responsibility and the public, shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the Draft Plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Art. 6.1, 6.2)	At the current time, this SA Report is published alongside the Preferred Options Document, under Regulation 18, so that representations might be made ahead of the Regulation 19 stage. The SA Report is not formally required until the Regulation 19 stage.
The SA Report must be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.	
The environmental report prepared pursuant to Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of any transboundary consultations entered into pursuant to Article 7 shall be taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption or submission to the legislative procedure.	The Council has taken into account Interim SA Report when finalising the Preferred Options Document for publication. Further SA work will be carried out to inform the development of the Regulation 19 version of the Plan.

Appendix II: Scoping Information

As discussed in Chapter 3 ('What's the scope of the SA?') the SA scope is primarily reflected in a list of objectives ('the SA framework'), which was established subsequent to a review of the sustainability 'context'/'baseline', analysis of key issues, and consultation. The detailed scoping information was presented in a Scoping Report sent to statutory consultees in December 2016. The responses received were taken into account and amendments made to the baseline information and draft SA Objectives where necessary. A Final Scoping Report was produced in March 2017.

The aim of this appendix is to present a summary of the scoping information and ensure that the information required under Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations is provided.

Relationship with other plans and programmes

The following list provides a summary of the key plans and programmes that provide the policy context for the South Somerset Local Plan.

National:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019)
- National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)
- The Localism Act 2011
- Housing White Paper (2017)
- Planning policy for traveller sites (DCLG, 2015)
- 25 Year Environment Plan (2017)
- Biodiversity 2020 Strategy (2011)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
- Climate Change Act 2008
- Energy Act 2008
- The Waste Management Plan for England (DEFRA, 2013)
- Five Year Forward View (NHS England, 2014)
- The Education (School Information) (England) (Amendments) Regulations, 2002
- Childcare Act, 2006
- Flood & Water Management Act 2010
- The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2011)
- UK Renewable Energy Roadmap (2011)
- The Heritage Statement (2017)
- Historic England Advice Notes; including The Historic Environment in Local Plans (2015); The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans (2015); and Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and the Historic Environment (2016)
- Air Quality Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) in the UK (2017)
- The Water Resources Strategy for England and Wales (Environment Agency, 2009)
- Water for Life (2011)
- National Policy Statement for Waste Water (2012)
- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2012)

- Laying the Foundations: A Housing Strategy for England (2011)
- The National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016 to 2021 (Infrastructure and Projects Authority, 2016)
- Road Investment Strategy 2015 – 2020 (Department for Transport, 2014)
- The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature (2011)
- The National Adaptation Programme – Making the Country Resilient to a Changing Climate (2013)

Sub-national:

- Somerset County Plan 2016 – 2020 (Somerset County Council, 2016)
- The Early Years and School Place Planning Infrastructure Growth Plan for Somerset 2016 (SCC, 2016)
- Five Year Strategy (Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group 2014 – 2019)
- Strategic Economic Plan 2014 – 2030 (Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), 2014)
- Somerset's Future Transport Plan 2011 – 2026 (SCC, 2011)
- Somerset Waste Core Strategy (SCC, 2013)
- Somerset Minerals Plan (SCC, 2015)
- River Basin Management Plan, South West River Basin District (Environment Agency and DEFRA, 2011)
- Catchment Flood Management Plans covering South Somerset (Environment Agency)
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (SCC, 2014)
- Somerset Levels and Moors Action Plan
- Water Resource Management Plan (Wessex Water, 2014)
- Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2014 – 2019
- Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB Management Plan 2014 – 2019
- Air Quality Strategy for Somerset (Somerset local authorities, 2008)
- Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Final Report (2016)
- Housing Market Areas and Functional Market Area in Somerset (2015)

Local (district)

- South Somerset Local Plan 2006 – 2028 (SSDC, adopted 2015)
- South Somerset District Council Plan 2016 – 2021 (SSDC, 2016)
- Shaping South Somerset – A Strategy for Sustainable Communities 2008 – 2026 (SSDC, 2008)
- South Somerset Economic Development Strategy 2012 – 2015 (SSDC, 2012)
- Yeovil Air Quality Action Plan (SSDC, 2005)
- South Somerset's Biodiversity Action Plan (SSDC, 2008)
- South Somerset Open Space Strategy 2011 – 2015 (SSDC, 2011)
- Strategy for Sport and Active Leisure in South Somerset 2006-2012 (SSDC, 2006)
- South Somerset's Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2016 – 2021 (SSDC, 2016)
- South Somerset District Council 5 year Housing Land Supply 2018 to 2023 (2018)
- Review of FEMAs and Understanding Market Trends (2017)
- South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study Report (2017)

- South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study Report (2017)
- South Somerset Historic Environment Strategy (2016)
- South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan update (2015/ 2016)
- South Somerset Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Report (2008)

Baseline information

Communities (including Housing)

Summary of current baseline

South Somerset's population of 164,982 (in 2015) is the largest of the five local authorities in Somerset. Population growth has been consistent, with South Somerset showing the largest overall increase in population across the whole of Somerset since 2001. The main cause of population growth in South Somerset is internal migration from elsewhere in the UK.

Yeovil continues to be the largest town in South Somerset, with a population of 45,339 in 2011. However, the largest population growth between 2001 and 2011 took place in Ilminster. South Somerset has a number of settlements of similar size – reflecting their historic market town status. This dispersed pattern of people and development has strengths and weaknesses. Questions about how best to support these locations whilst not overburdening them, whilst also marrying up infrastructure provision are critical to deciding on the long term future of the district.

The majority of people (over 98%) in South Somerset identify themselves as 'White', with some very small proportions of other ethnic groups, such as those who identify themselves as 'Asian/Asian British' (0.87%), and 'Black/African/Caribbean/Black British' (0.22%). In 2011, there were 148 people (0.09%) who identified themselves as 'Gypsy or Irish Traveller'.

It is unlikely that the Census in 2011 fully captures the issues associated with the Gypsy and Traveller community. In order to address the needs of this community the Council has consistently managed to deliver residential pitches (i.e. where people can permanently stay). Since 2006, the Council has delivered 35 residential pitches. However, the Council has been less able to facilitate transit sites and sites specifically for travelling showpeople. Looking ahead, the Gypsy and Traveller Needs Assessment shows that over the period 2016 to 2020 the Council will need to deliver a further eight residential pitches, and therefore will still be required to take a proactive stance to continuing to meet needs.

Clearly this means that South Somerset is less ethnically diverse than the South West and England, albeit broadly comparable with the other surrounding Somerset local authorities. South Somerset is an ageing district, with sharp growth in those aged over 60. This is twinned with recent data showing significant losses in those aged 15 to 29. If this trend is to continue over the long term, the district may face major challenges in providing a sufficiently large and competitive labour force.

Since 2001, South Somerset has seen a decline in both the 'Under 15' and '30-44' age groups. To some extent this is counter-balanced by growth in the '15-29', '45-59' and '60-74' age groups, but of course, the older age category includes those individuals who will have passed the state retirement age and will therefore not be economically active. Data on the state of the economy shows that there are no immediate issues linked to this loss of key segments of the workforce; however, it is something that may require a more positive policy approach in order to ensure the district caters to the future needs of a younger age group.

South Somerset is not alone in facing these issues. Each of the Somerset local authorities has experienced the same shift in its age-profile. Again, in looking at the long term future of Somerset, to ensure that it continues to be economically competitive, there may need to be a joined-up policy response to ensure that younger age cohorts are retained within the county.

Data from the Sub-National Housing Projections (2016) shows that the average household size in South Somerset in 2014 was 2.25 persons per household. As household size continues to reduce, it is likely that household formation rates will increase, which in turn will raise the overall number of households that will be created in the future. As the total population and number of households

formed increases in South Somerset, it is natural to expect the number of dwellings in South Somerset to also increase. Between 2001 and 2011, South Somerset delivered more new dwellings than any other local authority in Somerset. Indeed the rate of increase in South Somerset was higher than both the South-West and England average; and second only to Sedgemoor in Somerset. Between the period 2001 and 2011, South Somerset delivered over 7,200 new dwellings, at an annual average of 726, which represents an overall rate of change of nearly 11%.

Looking at the increase in dwellings across the main settlements in South Somerset, Neighbourhood Statistics – Census (2011) shows that each of the main settlements across South Somerset saw a moderate level of growth in dwellings over the period 2001 to 2011. It is not surprising to see Yeovil and Chard experience the largest growth in number of dwellings given they are most strategically important settlements in the district. However, as per the data on population growth, it is interesting to see Ilminster recording the greatest rate of change in percentage terms, and the highest annual increase after Yeovil and Chard.

Whilst the Census data shows a track record of delivery between 2001 and 2011, the Council also tracks the delivery of dwellings over the lifetime of the extant South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028). Between 2006 and 2016, the Council's monitoring shows that 6,252 new dwellings have been delivered in South Somerset

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

The extant South Somerset Local Plan policies have influenced the district's performance in delivering what is required for its communities and residents. This particular theme will have been most significantly influenced by the following existing policies: Strategic Policies – SS1, SS2, SS5, SS6, EQ2; and Settlement-Specific Policies – YV1, YV2; PMT1 – PMT4; LMT1 – LMT3; and HG1 – HG10.

Without the early review of the local plan, or a robust policy framework, there is likely to be a more disjointed approach to tackling the housing pressures within the district and fewer opportunities to deliver necessary infrastructure.

Furthermore, market pressures would likely result in built development occurring in an un-coordinated manner, with the focus taken away from the places where development and investment is needed the most. This, in turn, could make it more difficult to balance the role and function of the various market towns and rural settlements in the district, and the possibility of these locations losing their sense of place and identity. It could also result in unsustainable development which threatens the natural and historic environment, and potential detrimental impacts on current infrastructure.

The lack of a policy framework also means that those most in need of support (older persons, young families, the Gypsy and Traveller community, and other vulnerable sections of society) are less likely to receive the help they need to live, work and enjoy the district. The Early Review of the Local Plan provides an opportunity to set out specific policies for particularly sensitive communities that seek to address particular sustainability issues and which could include requirement for new development in and around those areas. The monitoring information on the South Somerset Local Plan (2006 – 2028) shows that the district is not able to demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. On the basis of a simple annualised average figure, the district is behind schedule in terms of net number of new dwellings delivered since 2006. The Early Review of the Local Plan offers the opportunity to help update this position and clarify the housing need and housing requirements in the district.

Economy and Employment

Summary of current baseline

South Somerset's "Functional Economic Market Area" (FEMA) was recently defined through the Housing Market Areas and Functional Economic Market Areas in Somerset (2015). The FEMA loosely aligns with the district's boundary.

The work carried out (2015) shows that South Somerset sits within the A303 Corridor FEMA, which is heavily influenced by the A303 as a strategic transport corridor connecting Somerset with the wider South West. The A303 Corridor, with Yeovil at the heart of it, provides a strong 'east-west' axis through the district, facilitating business connectivity as well as easy access to markets, labour, goods and materials. Future programmed improvements to the A303 (and the A358) therefore present an opportunity to enhance and strengthen the economy of South Somerset.

Of the 164,982 people living in South Somerset in 2015, 96,200 were of working age (16-64 years old). Of those capable of working, 82,500 were in employment (either as employees, self-employed, or part of Government- supported training and employment programmes).

The economy in South Somerset has traditionally been dominated by agriculture and manufacturing. The district's long established link with the aerospace industry also provides a locational advantage.

The total number of jobs in South Somerset (which includes self-employed, government-supported trainees and HM Forces) was 82,000 in 2015. 'Public administration, education and health sector' is the largest sector by number of employees in South Somerset, although the 'manufacturing' sector is also significant employer.

A move away from any perceived (or real) over-reliance on manufacturing is, on the one hand, a positive. Over-specialisation can result in an area's economy becoming vulnerable to a downturn in that sector. However, it is also necessary to appreciate that service sector jobs are, on the whole, less valuable to the economy, and are often less productive.

Continuing to strengthening the higher value manufacturing sector, and in particular, nurturing the aerospace supply chain within South Somerset should remain a key objective of the Council and the business community to ensure a high value and resilient economy emerges for the long term.

The quality of the district's environment also supports a small but important tourism industry, with both direct and indirect jobs underpinned by tourism spending. The exact size of the tourism sector is difficult to define due to its varied and multifaceted nature. However, the data shows that approximately 3,000 to 3,500 jobs are supported by the sector in South Somerset, and that this represents around 4% of the sectoral employment.

Similarly, the Council is conscious that the district has a well-established and prominent agricultural sector, including farm-based employees. As at 2011, the number of South Somerset residents, aged 16-65 who were employed in "Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing", was just over 2,100.

The vast majority - 90% - of businesses in South Somerset are micro enterprises employing up to 9 people, a proportion that has remained broadly similar since 2010. Given this, planning policies and decisions should continue to support the development of these sized businesses in the future as being vital to the local economy.

At the other end of the scale, there are only 15 (or 0.2%) large enterprises that employ more than 250 people in the district, a 25% fall since 2010. In considering the future growth of businesses, it is important to be realistic about the potential to attract numerous large enterprises to the district.

ONS annual population data (2015) highlights that South Somerset has a lower percentage of people with no qualifications than either the South West average or the Great Britain average. But it is also true, that South Somerset has a lower percentage of people with the highest level qualification, NVQ4 (degree-level equivalent), than either the South West or Great Britain.

The Council will need to work closely with all education institutions, but especially further and higher education departments to ensure that those achieving the highest qualifications are not only taught here, but choose to stay here and live and work in South Somerset.

Analysing data looking back to 2001 shows that the number of claimants in South Somerset has been consistently lower than the regional and national.

Even so, South Somerset was not immune to the impact of the recession, and in 2008 the number of claimants doubled. So much so, that 2009's figures represent the highest recorded number of claimants in the last 15 years.

Between 2009 and 2013 the number of claimants remained high, and significantly higher than historic records. However, since 2013 the figures have reduced dramatically and are now below figures recorded back in 2001. In proportional terms, South Somerset's number of claimants now represents less than 1% and is significantly below the South West and Great Britain average.

Yeovil remains most important retail centre within the district. But the town centre faces competition from out-of-town retail estates and adjacent retail estates including in West Dorset.

Vacancy rates in Yeovil town centre have increased since 2006 and recessionary impacts have been felt within the town centre and Primary Shopping Area.

The data demonstrates that vacancy rates have increased over time. Whilst the last survey undertaken in September 2015 shows a slight improvement, the overall vacancy rate across the Town Centre of 14.17%, remains significantly above the national average of 12.5% recorded by Retail Gazette in March 2016. This is likely to be part in due to the UK economic climate and changing shopping habits and part is due to the age, attractiveness, availability and cost of property stock.

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

The extant South Somerset Local Plan policies have influenced the district's performance in delivering what is required for its communities and residents. This particular theme will have been most significantly influenced by the following existing policies: Strategic Policies – SS1, SS2, SS3, EQ2; and Settlement-Specific Policies – YV1, YV2; PMT1 – PMT4; LMT1 – LMT3; and HG1 – HG10.

Without the early review of the local plan, or a robust policy framework, confidence in the development industry to invest in key employment sites and facilitate a modern economy in South Somerset will be reduced. There will be less of an opportunity to marry up residential and economic development and therefore some of the direct and indirect benefits of linking jobs to homes will be missed.

Without a robust policy framework delivering economic growth and job targets would be increasingly difficult. Question marks over the viability and deliverability of employment land would be more acute, particularly where there may be expectations that the site could come forward as a housing site (and thus offering a greater return on investment). A lack of a flexible and up-to-date policy framework would remove certainty and undermine investment decisions, and in turn reduce the overall quantum of economic development due to the preference for housing. It is likely to also yield employment land coming forward in locations that are not appropriate or sustainable.

Health and Equalities

Summary of current baseline

The Somerset JSNA (2015) identifies the key health care issues and long term priorities for Somerset. The greatest challenge across the county is the ageing nature of the population. In Somerset life expectancy is greater than the national average. This skewed demographic profile poses a challenge to the sustainability of public services, and has become a key driver for health care planning as, whilst life expectancy has increased, a healthy life expectancy (the average age at which we can expect to remain free from long-term health problems) has not increased to the same extent. Increasingly, people will spend a greater portion of their life in ill-health, placing a significant burden on health and social care services, unless healthy life expectancy is improved.

The ageing population has particular implications for services in Somerset as it is a key risk factor for many common health conditions. Somerset has an older population than the national average; with the 65+ age group projected to rise by a further 30% by 2021. By 2033, over half the population in Somerset will be over 65. This will increase the number of patients with cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes. Projected increases for dementia and heart failure are also high. It must also be noted that smaller increases in conditions that are more common (e.g. hypertension) can have a bigger impact on the health service.

The major burdens of disease in Somerset, particularly resulting in long term conditions, are those that are mainly caused by lifestyles choices and are largely preventable – 40% of health is affected by lifestyle, 30% genetics, 5% environment, 15% society and 10% healthcare. The focus in Somerset is on targeting key lifestyle related health risks such as obesity, smoking and alcohol use.

Cancer, digestive, musculoskeletal and circulatory diseases along with maternity are the main causes of admission to hospital; while digestive, circulatory and respiratory disease are the main causes of emergency admissions. Projections show that in the future, some of the biggest increases in hospital admissions are likely to be in chronic conditions such as circulatory disease and cancers, which would increase in an ageing population.

The rate of mental health outpatient attendances varies quite considerably over time, but has shown a decrease in Somerset and in 2010/11 was much lower than the regional and national average. The

admission rates also appear to have been decreasing in Somerset so that it is no longer higher than the national average.

An interesting conclusion from the recent evaluation work undertaken as part of the Symphony Project is that those patients with the most acute, complex and inter-related health issues account of just 4% of the population, but take up over 50% of the NHS' costs. The top 15% of the population requiring health care accounts for over 85% of the NHS' expenditure.

Equalities

The South Somerset Equalities Profile (2015) sets out a range of equalities related baseline information and this is summarised below.

Sex

- There are slightly more women (50.9%) in South Somerset than men (49.1%)
- South Somerset's population is aging, with below the English national average for those aged under 45, whilst having significantly higher levels of those aged between 45 and 65 and those aged over 65.
- As with elsewhere in the UK the life expectancy is slightly higher for women than men (84.4% for women and 80.9% for men), however the average life expectancy for both men and women in South Somerset is higher than other parts of the UK and the national average.
- 37.4% of Job Seekers Allowance claimants in October 2015 were female; compared to 62.7% of claimants which are men.

Race

- According to the Census, (2011):
- 98.1% of the population in South Somerset identify as White
- 95% of the population identified as being 'White British' with 2.7% identifying as 'White Other'
- South Somerset has a small Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population with 1.9% identifying as BME
- The UK is the country of birth for the vast majority of residents of South Somerset, 94%
- 3.1% put an EU member state as their country of birth, this includes children of military personnel born overseas
- 2.9% of the population said that their country of birth was 'elsewhere in the world'

Religion or Belief

- Christianity is the largest religion in Somerset with 65.9% of the population identifying as Christian. This is higher than the national population where 59% identify as Christian.
- 1.2% of the Somerset population stated they had a religion but were not Christian
- 25.2% said that they had no religious identity.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT)

- The Integrated Household Survey (2014) estimates that the number of people who identify as Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual as 1.6% of the national population. If this figure is applied to South Somerset it would mean that there are 2633 Lesbian, Gay or Bisexual people in South Somerset.

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

South Somerset is an area of contrasts in relation to deprivation. The latest data release of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is from 2015.

Of the 103 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) identified within the district, two fall within the 10% most deprived in the country, and five fall within the 20% most deprived within the country. Of the seven LSOAs that are the most deprived – these are located in Yeovil [Yeovil West Ward (x2) and Yeovil Central Ward, Yeovil East Ward (x3); and Chard Jocelyn Ward].

At the opposite end of the spectrum, there are six LSOAs that fall within the 10% least deprived in the country – these are located in: Yeovil [Yeovil South Ward, Yeovil Without Ward, and Brympton Ward (x2)], Cary Ward, and Chard Crimchard Ward.

It is of interest that the towns of Yeovil and Chard witness both extremes of deprivation, with areas amongst the least deprived in the country and those who are the most deprived in the country. A clear indication that policy approach in these towns need to be able to cater to a large range of needs and demands.

The Council has looked at domains within the overall IMD, and has identified the following localised issues:

- Income Deprivation – in Yeovil West, Yeovil East, and Chard Jocelyn;
- Education, Skills and Training – in Yeovil West, Yeovil East, and Chard Holyrood; • Health Deprivation and Disability – in: Chard Jocelyn, Yeovil Central, Yeovil East;
- Crime – in Yeovil East, Yeovil Central, Chard Jocelyn;
- Barriers to Housing and Services – in Tower, Iselmoor, Burrow Hill and Windwhistle;
- Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) – in Yeovil West, Yeovil East, and Yeovil Without; and
- Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index (IDAOPI) – in Chard Jocelyn, Yeovil West, Yeovil East, and Crewkerne.

Education

In looking to raise the profile of jobs and occupations in South Somerset it will be important to attract and retain more highly skilled and qualified individuals.

ONS annual population survey data (2015) highlights that South Somerset has a lower percentage of people with no qualifications than either the South West average or the Great Britain average. But it is also true, that South Somerset has a lower percentage of people with the highest level qualification, NVQ4 (degree-level equivalent), than either the South West or Great Britain.

The Council will need to work closely with all education institutions, but especially further and higher education departments to ensure that those achieving the highest qualifications are not only taught here, but choose to stay here and live and work in South Somerset

Reductions in funding present challenges to delivering education infrastructure. There is less centralised money available from SCC for building new schools and premises. Therefore releasing additional capacity by maximising the use of existing buildings, as well as realising opportunities on site will be key to the future provision of education places.

Early Years Education (under 5 years)

Overall, there are currently sufficient Early Years places in the District. Extending the 2 year old offer, introducing 30 hours funded childcare to working parents of 3 and 4 year olds, and new housing developments has the potential to create shortages particularly in Yeovil, Chard and Wincanton which need to be monitored and managed.

In Yeovil, the increased demand for places in the short to medium term can be met through existing capacity or planned increases (co-locating on primary schools). In the long term additional capacity will be required, but there are no plans for this currently as some of the need may be addressed through the private sector

Primary and Secondary Education (4-16 years)

Surplus places in schools were a strong trend until recently. Now growth in the population coupled with planned housing development is putting pressure on school places. Plans are in place to provide additional early years and primary education places in Yeovil. The County Council are working with the District Council to consider options for ensuring sufficient places in Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster, Wincanton and Castle Cary.

The level of development proposed through the Local Plan does not generate sufficient places to justify a new secondary school in Yeovil. SCC and SSDC will continue to review secondary provision in Yeovil and will consider all the options available for increasing capacity at any or all of the secondary school sites before consideration is given to building a new secondary school.

Further Education and Training (post 16)

Yeovil College have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed Local Plan growth. Austerity cuts have impacted funding and the challenge to develop the college estate is considerable with the financial constraints that it faces. The College is aware of the need to align itself with the LEP priorities. Officers will work with Yeovil College to improve the linkages with LEP priorities and ensure its financial viability going forward.

Higher Education is a priority for Yeovil College, who are working with several universities to seek opportunities for growth in this area.

Special Education Needs

No new infrastructure is planned in light of the forthcoming review of Special Education Needs infrastructure, due to report in 2016.

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

The local plan can shape and guide development to increase levels of sustainability and there ensure that the built environment contributes to delivering health benefits, and supports healthy, inclusive and active communities.

Without the Early Review of the Local Plan in place, development is less likely to deliver the type and quality of development that can positively bring about health benefits. There would also be an increased likelihood of negative effects on people's health and well-being through sporadic and unplanned development, and a fragmentation of services and facilities, with less clarity over the type of provisions expected within new development.

Transport and Movement

Summary of current baseline

Existing travel patterns in South Somerset reflect its rural nature, with reliance on the car for many journeys.

Road

The A303, which is part of the Strategic Road Network (managed by Highways England), dissects the district from east to west. The A303 facilitates connectivity to larger centres such as Exeter in the west, and Andover in the east.

The A30 also runs east to west but is positioned to the south of the district. The A30 merges with the A303 in the west to provide onward connections to Devon and Exeter. The A30 heading east serves to connect South Somerset with settlements including Sherborne, Shaftsbury and Salisbury. Together these two roads provide the dominant transport corridor through South Somerset.

The A358 and A37 provide additional radial routes through South Somerset on a north-south axis. The A358 connects the district to the M5 motorway, opening up links to Taunton, Bridgwater and beyond; whilst the A37 links the district with the urban conurbations of Bristol and Bath.

The Office for National Statistics has released the 2011-based 'Travel To Work Areas'. The information shows that the majority of South Somerset falls within a travel to work zone entitled "Yeovil" and concludes that the area is highly self-contained with 83% of people in employment who live in the area also work in area; and 83% of jobs in the area are fulfilled by people that live in the area.

That being said, the road network serves as a vital link for those living in South Somerset but working elsewhere, and those businesses located in South Somerset, but whose staff live outside of the district. The strongest relationship with those living in South Somerset but choosing to work elsewhere is with West Dorset, Taunton Deane and Mendip. The strongest relationship with those working in South Somerset but living elsewhere is with Mendip, West Dorset, and North Dorset.

Elsewhere in South Somerset the road network is categorised by more minor 'A' roads and other lower classification roads. This is typical of the nature of the road network in Somerset, which is far more rural than either the regional or national average.⁵²

⁵² DfT Road length statistics, 2011: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-network-size-andcondition>

Generally, congestion on the road network is caused by junctions or changes in the number of lanes, rather than the number of cars travelling along a road link. Nevertheless, guidance is available on the capacity of urban roads and rural road links, which applies varying capacity levels according to road type, width, speed limit etc. The flows highlighted in the figures above are within the daily flow range for a wide single carriageway on a rural road link, although the A358 Ilminster to Taunton is near the maximum for this type of road.

The A358 from Southfields Roundabout at Ilminster to the M5 along with parts of the A303 are recognised as suffering from congestion, particularly in the summer months when subject to increased flows from seasonal tourism-related traffic, and at peak times on weekends.

Highways England has indicated on a number of occasions that they have concerns surrounding the capacity of Southfields Roundabout to accommodate additional traffic. Whilst the Government has announced plans to improve this section it is likely that in the short-term both residential and employment proposals at Ilminster will need to clearly show how they do not cause further capacity issues on the strategic transport network.⁵³ In the case of the employment proposals in Ilminster it may be that development does not come forward until Government has concluded on its detailed plans for the improvements.

There are also congestion issues at some of the larger settlements, particularly at peak times in parts of Yeovil, Chard, and Crewkerne. Road improvement schemes are proposed that will help to address issues at these settlements. However, overall, as a rural county Somerset's roads are generally less congested in peak times than other areas, with average vehicle speeds of 29.6mph being consistently above the regional (27.7mph) and national (24.3mph) averages.⁵⁴

Devon County Council have identified concerns relating to growth at Chard leading to increased traffic travelling through Axminster and, if this impact can be demonstrated, may request contributions towards a solution.

Rail

There are three railway lines that run through South Somerset:

- London (Waterloo) to Exeter; the West of England (WoE) line, in the Wessex Franchise area operated by South West Trains;
- London (Paddington) to Taunton, Exeter and the south west. This forms part of the Great Western franchise operated by Great Western Railway (GWR); and
- Bristol to Weymouth; the Heart of Wessex (HoW) line, which again falls within the Great Western franchise.

The District is served by six railway stations at:

- Yeovil Junction (WoE);
- Yeovil Pen Mill (HoW);
- Crewkerne (WoE);
- Templecombe (WoE);
- Castle Cary (Paddington – Taunton, and HoW); and
- Bruton (HoW).

Notably, several of these stations are located on the periphery of the associated settlement (e.g. Yeovil Junction, Crewkerne, Castle Cary) which presents challenges in accessing the station by sustainable travel modes.

In terms of usage of railway stations in South Somerset, the largest growth in passenger numbers has been at Castle Cary railway station, which serves a wide rural catchment in South Somerset and beyond, particularly for long distance commuters. The station car park is currently at capacity, and GWR consider that this is restricting demand for new passengers.

⁵³ Road Investment Strategy: Investment Plan, DfT, 2014.

⁵⁴ DfT Average vehicle speeds during the weekday morning peak, September 2014.

Although passenger use has grown, the station at Yeovil Pen Mill has not altered much for 40 years or more. Accessibility improvements would provide a more attractive gateway to the town and ensure that the station supports the growth agenda for the town.

Bus/coach

Coverage of local bus services in South Somerset is not extensive, reflective of the geographically dispersed population in the district. There are several services operating in Yeovil, with other settlements in the district being linked by various routes that operate within South Somerset and beyond.

Yeovil is unusual for a settlement of its size with seven different bus operators providing services at the town, the main ones being 'First Wessex' and 'South West Coaches' who between them offer most town services in Yeovil as well providing links to other settlements. 'Damory', 'Stagecoach', 'First – The buses of Somerset', 'First – Bristol, Bath and West' and 'Nippy Bus' offer other routes across the District (including Yeovil) and beyond. 'Nippy Bus' also offer registered Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) services in some of the more rural areas.

Parts of Yeovil are not well served by bus, notably the employment sites on the western side including the town's major employer AgustaWestland. This is partly because the routes have traditionally terminated in the town centre and deviating would detract from the existing customer base; and partly because, in the past, where a route is in close proximity to those sites, adequate provision for bus stops on the main distributor routes (e.g. the Western Relief Road and Lysander Road) has not been made.

Discussions with bus operators have highlighted difficulties for buses in accessing the developing Wyndham Park estate (Lyde Road Key Site allocated in the Local Plan 1991-2011).

Most local bus and coach routes serving Yeovil use the Yeovil Bus Station. The bus station was built in the 1960s and does not reflect the requirements of both passengers and operators to deliver a modern transport interchange. Access to information for passengers is a particular issue given the number of different operators that serve the station. The Local Plan seeks, subject to general viability, contributions to sustainable transport interchange within Yeovil and Chard.

The existing provision of bus services in Chard is suggested as being relatively ineffective due to significant wait times and short journey times by comparison, and high fares for the distance travelled.⁵⁵

Community transport is available in some parts of the District for those people whose needs are not met by normal public transport – these operate on a not-for-profit basis and include 'Ring & Ride' minibuses such as the Chard and Ilminster area 'SLINKY' service, and various community car schemes.

Long distance coach routes are provided by 'National Express' from Yeovil (destinations include London and Bristol) and 'Berrys' from Ilminster, South Petherton, Yeovil and Wincanton to London.

Bus passenger journeys in Somerset have fallen over the last five years, in contrast to the upward trend being experienced in most local authorities across the south west. There has been a reduction in subsidy from SCC, particularly for Sunday and evening services since 2009/2010, meaning that there are now no Sunday bus services operating within the district, and during the week services generally finish in the early evening. There are 16.4 bus passenger journeys per head of population in Somerset, which is the lowest of any highways authority in the south west and 8th lowest in England.⁵⁶

The proportion of bus services running on time has been falling over the last five years in Somerset, from 86% in 2009/10 to 76% in 2013/14. The regional and national average is higher at 82%-83% in 2013/14.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Chard Strategic Transport Appraisal Report, 2010.

⁵⁶ DfT: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/bus-statistics>

⁵⁷ Ibid.

Cycling

Traffic count data indicates a fall in the total number of miles travelled by pedal cycles on major roads in Somerset from just over 5 million miles in the year 2000, to just over 3.7 million miles in 2014.⁵⁸ However, data on specific roads can show a different trend; for example, cycle use along Lysander Road, Yeovil has nearly doubled over the same period.⁵⁸

Cycle use in South Somerset, as measured by the proportion of residents cycling to work, is the same as the national average at 2.8%, but slightly lower than the regional average of 3.4%.⁵⁹ Adjoining districts such as Sedgemoor (4.5%) and Taunton Deane (6.3%) have higher proportions of people cycling to work; although Mendip is slightly lower (2.2%).

National Routes 26, 30 and 33 of the National Cycle Network travel through South Somerset. There are other regional and local routes, but the cycle network does suffer from a lack of connectivity in many places.⁶⁰

In Yeovil, there is an existing East-West off road cycle link from Pen Mill Station through the Country Park and via Lysander Road up to Asda. Initial work on the County Council's emerging 'Network Development plan' for cycling in Yeovil has identified gaps in the cycle network. These deficiencies are also illustrated in Moving Somerset Forward's Cycle map for Yeovil.

Car Parking

The South Somerset Car Parking Strategy Review (2013) highlights the key car parking issues at each of the main settlements, informed by existing use and capacity, along with future demand projections. Currently (as at 2012), there is a small lack of car parking capacity at Somerton, Ilchester, Stoke-sub-Hamdon (in evenings), and short stay parking in Yeovil.

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

The extant South Somerset Local Plan policies have influenced the district's performance in delivering an integrated transport network. This particular theme will have been most significantly influenced by the following existing policies: Strategic Policies – SS1, SS6, TA1, TA2, T4, T5, and T6; Settlement-Specific Policies – YV1, YV2, YV5; PMT1 and PMT2; and TA3.

Somerset County Council as Highway Authority also has a key role in ensuring that the impacts of new development on the transport network are mitigated and managed – and therefore to some extent this would occur with or without the Early Review of the Local Plan.

However, the Early Review of the Local Plan offers the opportunity to refine local policies so that they produce more effective responses to the impacts of development. It should also allow for a more integrated package of transport measures to be drafted and implemented. This should mean both individual effects and cumulative effects are better resolved.

In looking at development sites as part of the Early Review of the Local Plan, both the Council and Somerset County Council should be more proactive in designing solutions to encourage greater use of public transport, walking and cycling; better link housing development to economic development; and encourage more sustainable travel patterns.

Air Quality

Summary of current baseline

The largely rural nature of the district means that air quality in South Somerset is generally good, with low levels of sulphur, oxides of nitrogen and particulates in comparison to the rest of England. The exception is Yeovil, where the entire urban area of Yeovil was designated as an Air Quality Management Area in 2002 due to forecast exceedance of the average annual objective for nitrogen dioxide at several locations within the urban boundary, largely from traffic emissions.⁶¹

The whole town was declared, rather than only the areas near the A30 and A37, because a town wide action plan would be required to manage local and through traffic. Air quality is subject to regular

⁵⁸ DfT traffic count data

⁵⁹ Proportion of working residents (16-74) cycling to work, Census 2011.

⁶⁰ <http://www.movingssomersetforward.co.uk/cycle-maps>

⁶¹ South Somerset Air Quality Action Plan Progress Report, 2007

monitoring at various locations within this area, with one automatic monitoring site located at Yeovil District Hospital, plus 18 non-automatic monitoring stations elsewhere across the town.

The overall trend in the concentration of nitrogen dioxide has remained stable over recent years. At the automatic monitoring station near the Hospital, both the annual and hourly mean concentrations of nitrogen dioxide measured during 2012 and 2013 were less than the objective values. In fact, the annual mean objective concentration has not been exceeded at Yeovil District Hospital since records began.⁶²

However, monitoring data shows that the concentrations of nitrogen dioxide in excess of the objective values at three locations, Ilchester Road, Sherborne Road and Lyde Road.⁶³ These are associated with road traffic sources along key transport links.

The progress report recommends that the Yeovil AQMA remains in order to help reinforce policies that help maintain and enhance air quality in Yeovil.⁶⁴ No other specified pollutant was identified as requiring further attention in South Somerset.

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

Without the Early Review, the existing Local Plan policies will remain, as will national policy in the NPPF paragraph 124. The existing Local Plan pollution control policy (EQ7) may still be considered fit for purpose, as it seeks to mitigate adverse effects from development upon air quality. It also specifically mentions that new development should not exacerbate air quality problems in existing and potential AQMAs.

However, the Early Review may seek to better coordinate the delivery of new housing, employment and infrastructure, using lessons learnt in implementing the current Local Plan. Therefore, without the Early Review, there is a risk that reducing the need to travel and addressing congestion issues will be less effectively delivered.

Energy and Climate Change

Summary of current baseline

Government statistics indicate the following levels of energy consumption in South Somerset in 2014:⁶⁵

- Coal – 111 Gigawatt hours (GWh) (mainly from Industrial and Commercial sector).
- Manufactured fuels – 2 GWh (all from domestic use). • Petroleum products – 1,750 GWh (mainly from road transport).
- Gas – 961 GWh (around 60% from domestic use and 40% from industrial and commercial use).
- Electricity – 851 GWh (around 60% from industrial and commercial use and 40% from domestic use).
- Bioenergy – 125 GWh. 9.2 The total energy consumption from all fuels in South Somerset is 3,802 GWh.

There has been a trend for steadily reducing energy consumption over the last decade. This is despite population growth, and is largely explained by falls in consumption over this period from petroleum products and gas.

In terms of carbon dioxide emissions per head for South Somerset, data shows a trend of reducing carbon dioxide emissions over the last decade.⁶⁶ Emissions in South Somerset are slightly higher than for England as a whole, but are the same as the average in Somerset and therefore typical of a rural area.

⁶² 2013 and 2014 Air Quality Progress Report for South Somerset District Council, April 2014.

⁶³ 2013 and 2014 Air Quality Progress Report for South Somerset District Council, April 2014.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Department of Energy and Climate Change, Total sub-national final energy consumption, 2014

⁶⁶ Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, Estimates of carbon dioxide emissions for local authorities and regions national statistics: 2005-2014. Graph taken from Somerset Intelligence web site:
<http://www.somersetintelligence.org.uk/environment/>

The 'Industrial and Commercial' sector is the highest source of carbon dioxide emissions in South Somerset, with 40% of all emissions. This is followed by 'Transport' with 33% of carbon dioxide emissions, and 'Domestic' use being 27%.⁶⁷

The trend for reducing energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions per head will minimise the contribution to climate change. Another key aspect in addressing climate change is the use of renewable energy to generate electricity and heat, which has grown significantly over recent years.

Some 19% of England's total electrical demand is now being met through renewable electricity generation. Like other parts of the south west, solar PV has by far the largest installed capacity in Somerset, with biomass also making a notable contribution.⁶⁸

By the 2050s, climate change in South Somerset is likely to mean more extreme weather events, and:⁶⁹

- Summers being 2-3 degrees centigrade hotter, and 20-40% drier;
- Winters being 2-3 degrees warmer, and 10-20% wetter.

Even if the world were to go 'zero-carbon' immediately, there would still likely be 30-40 years of climate change due to greenhouse gas emissions already released.⁷⁰ This means that adaptation to climate change should be factored in to ensure development can cope with future changes in the climate.

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

The support for energy efficiency measures in new development through improving Building Regulations and supportive national and local policy (Policy EQ1) will continue without the Early Review. This will contribute to minimising energy consumption and carbon dioxide emissions. The trend for the growth in renewable energy generation may slow due to a reduction in Government subsidies, although the general support of the NPPF and Local Plan Policy EQ1 would continue to apply, allowing new renewable energy generation to be developed where appropriate. Policy EQ1 also includes climate change adaptation measures through the design of new development.

The Early Review could provide further support for energy and climate change by identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon sources. Water efficiency standards can be included in the Early Review to help adapt to climate change, particularly during summer months (see following section on water resources for further detail).

Water: Resources, Quality and Flooding

Water supply and the abstraction, purification, and provision of potable water in South Somerset is managed by Wessex Water (WW). This company manage a series of abstraction licenses at water courses; as well as owning and operating supply networks, water treatment works, and reservoirs to ensure that water supply is available at all times. WW are also responsible for sewerage services for most of the district.

WW divide their water supply coverage area into four zones for water resource and drought planning purposes. As can be seen on the map below, most of South Somerset is in the north zone, which is supplied by groundwater services. Water in this zone can also be transferred from the Wylfe Valley to Somerset. The remainder of the district lies within the west zone, which contains all the region's impounding reservoirs that are currently used for bulk water supply. Water can also be transferred both ways between the west and north zones.

Nearly half of water supply is for households, with commercial demands making up nearly a third. Leakage comprises around 20% of water demand.⁷¹ Up until the mid 1990's, the demand for water in the WW region was steadily rising. However, since the mid-1990s, the demand for water has been falling, from around 425 million litres per day, to less than 350 million litres per day (average annual

⁶⁷ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy, Estimates of carbon dioxide emissions for local authorities and regions national statistics: 2005-2014.

⁶⁸ 69 Renewable energy – a local progress report for England, RegenSW, 2016.

⁶⁹ Central estimate under medium emissions scenario, UK Climate Projections 2009.

⁷⁰ Adapting to Climate Change: UK Climate Projections, Defra, 2009.

⁷¹ Water Resources Management Plan, Wessex Water, 2014.

demands).⁷² This reduction has occurred despite an overall increase in population, and can be explained by:

- Leakage reduction being halved to 69 million litres per day;
- Customers switching to a metered supply;
- More efficient use of water in homes and businesses;
- Reduced commercial demands due to the closure of some large user industrial sites.⁷³

Household water usage in the region has been steadily declining since the mid 2000's, and is now around 140 litres per person per day.⁷⁴

The vast majority of South Somerset is considered to have a 'low' level of water stress, although a small area around Yeovil is shown as having 'serious' stress. WW seek to reduce average per person water consumption to 130 litres per day by 2040. Overall, WW calculate that they will have a surplus of water supply over demand for the next 25 years.

Although the majority of water that is abstracted (75% of which comes from groundwater sources) by WW is of a very good quality, there has been deterioration in recent years at some sources, particularly in relation to nitrate and pesticide concentrations at some sources. WW consider that, in many ways, issues around raw water quality currently represent a larger challenge to WW than water resource issues.⁷⁵ Treatment works can be built to address these issues.

Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been defined around groundwater sources, to highlight the risk of contamination from any activities that might cause pollution in the area. A large zone encompasses South Petherton and surrounding villages to the west and south, with smaller zones near Chard and Ansford/Castle Cary.

The ecological status of rivers in South Somerset is generally moderate, with some small sections of both good and poor quality. The main reason in the Parrett catchment for not achieving good status is due to agricultural and rural land management. River quality in the south west of the district (River Axe) is considered to be poor.

The following map shows the areas of medium (flood zone 2) and high (flood zone 3) fluvial flood risk in South Somerset. Fluvial flooding predominantly affects the Somerset Levels and Moors, although several settlements are also affected, such as parts of Langport/Huish Episcopi, Ilminster, Bruton, and Ilchester.

Surface water flooding is an issue in parts of settlements across South Somerset, with many settlements affected by flooding incidents in the past. The following settlements have significant (300+) numbers of residential properties identified as being at risk from surface water flooding: Yeovil – 1,090; Chard – 447; Ilminster – 497; Crewkerne – 300.⁷⁶ The River Parrett catchment does not have any major aquifers so groundwater flooding is not a major risk.⁷⁷

Soil and Land

Summary of current baseline

The total area covered by South Somerset is 958 square kilometres.⁷⁸ The vast majority of this area is taken up by 'greenspace', which accounts for 885.5 sq km or 92% of the total area. The proportion of developed land, including gardens, in South Somerset is 5.8%.⁸⁶ This proportion is lower than both the south west regional average of 7%, and the national (England) average of 9.8%.

The geology of South Somerset heavily influences the physical character of the district, and therefore is important to several themes – including landscape; historic environment; water resources and flooding; as well as soil and land. The underlying geology is composed mainly of Jurassic clays,

⁷² Water Resources Management Plan, Wessex Water, 2014

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Somerset County Council

⁷⁷ Parrett Catchment Flood Management Plan, 2009.

⁷⁸ Areas taken from ONS Neighbourhood Statistics, Key Figures for Physical Environment.

sands and limestones. This has created landforms of wide clay vales or rolling lowland with occasional hilly outcrops of limestone. The central lowlands form part of the peat moor grazing lands that extend out north-westwards into the Somerset Levels with their characteristic long vistas and rectilinear drainage patterns. The Oolitic limestones of the south east part of the district form part of the limestone belt that runs away north through the Cotswolds and beyond.⁷⁹

South Somerset benefits from some areas of high quality agricultural land. The proportion of Grade 1 agricultural land in South Somerset is higher than the county, regional and national average. The overall proportion of agricultural land within grades 1 – 3 is also higher in South Somerset.⁸⁰

Detailed evaluation has been carried out of agricultural land quality on the edge of the main settlements.⁸¹ Notably, there is a fertile area of Grade 1 agricultural land east of Ilminster and north of Crewkerne, along with a belt of Grade 1 wrapping around the southern edge of Yeovil.⁸¹

In terms of contaminated land, a diverse history of land use means that there are a number of potentially hazardous land uses throughout the district. These include abattoirs, gasworks and coke works, motor engineers/petrol stations, coal storage/distribution sites, engineering works and wood treatment processes. There are also known former landfill sites and numerous other potential “in-filled” sites at former ponds, pits and rail cuttings – often the fill material is unknown as many of the sites were in operation prior to 1974 when controls were first brought in. To date, SSDC has identified 3,400 potential sites of interest, which have been filtered down to 116 ranked sites for further investigation.⁸²

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

Additional built development can lead to significant effects on soil and land through the loss of greenfield land. The existing policy context will continue to apply, such as Local Plan Policy EQ7: Pollution Control, and NPPF paragraph 112 with regards to agricultural land quality. This should ensure adequate consideration is given to these issues.

However, the Early Review can identify specific sites for development, rather than large ‘directions of growth’ in the current plan. A more ‘refined’ approach offers the opportunity to better minimise adverse impacts upon soil and land. In addition, cognisant of the larger proportion of higher quality agricultural land in South Somerset, consideration can be given to introducing a local policy on this issue.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Summary of current baseline

South Somerset has many areas that are recognised for their biodiversity and geodiversity value. Parts of the Somerset Levels and Moors are internationally designated due to wetland habitat that attracts extensive bird populations – these areas are designated as a Special Protection Area and Ramsar site. In addition, the international designation at Bracket’s Coppice Special Area of Conservation is located 1.5km from South Somerset’s boundary in West Dorset, to the south east of Crewkerne. This site is noted for the presence of a colony of a rare bat species.

There are also a range of nationally designated sites in South Somerset, with four National Nature Reserves and 39 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

There are nearly 600 Local Wildlife Sites in South Somerset. There are also five LNRs within South Somerset:

- Moldrams Ground near Wincanton;
- Chard Reservoir;
- Eastfield, High Ham near Langport;
- Bincombe Beeches, Crewkerne; and
- Ham Hill

⁷⁹ South Somerset Historic Environment Strategy (2016)

⁸⁰ Provisional Agricultural Land Classification (1:250,000 scale), Natural England

⁸¹ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

⁸² Contaminated Land Inspection Strategy 2016-2021, SSDC, 2016

South Somerset is also home to several fauna species which are identified as European Protected Species, and therefore afforded protection under the Habitats Directive and supporting Regulations:

- Bats;
- Large blue butterfly;
- Common dormouse;
- Great Crested Newt; and
- Common Otter.

There are a large number of habitats and species of “*principal importance for the purposes of conserving biodiversity*”, as defined in Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, present locally. Across the county, Somerset contains a total of 839 species of “*principal importance*”.⁸³ A variety of habitats of “*principal importance*” are also present, although a list of these has not been specifically produced for Somerset.

It is important to ensure that connectivity between sites, species and habitats is maintained and enhanced, through the promotion of ‘ecological networks’ – these are described as the infrastructure of existing and future habitat needed to allow populations of species and habitats to survive.⁸⁴ Ecological networks support the movement of individuals between populations in a connected landscape, which can help them more resilient, particularly to climate change.

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

Designated sites will continue to receive appropriate protection consistent with the level of designation (international, national, local), as set out in legislation, Local Plan policy EQ4 and the NPPF Chapter 11. The Early Review provides the opportunity to use latest evidence (such as Ecological Networks) to plan positively for biodiversity and geodiversity enhancements through site allocations, for example by improving habitat connectivity.

Landscape and Townscape

Summary of current baseline

South Somerset is a large, rural district, with a population distributed across a few key market towns, several smaller towns, and numerous villages. The landscape and topography is varied, with landforms of wide clay vales or rolling lowland with occasional hilly outcrops of limestone. The central lowlands form part of the peat moor grazing lands that extend out north-westwards into the Somerset Levels with their characteristic long vistas and rectilinear drainage patterns. The Oolitic limestones of the south east part of the district form part of the limestone belt that runs away north through the Cotswolds and southwards to Crewkerne. Outcrops at Ham Hill and Castle Cary have been quarried for building stone and have made a major contribution to the local distinctiveness of settlements.

Parts of South Somerset are nationally recognised as being particularly special landscapes, through being designated as Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The Blackdown Hills AONB extends into the western part of the district, with Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs AONB in the eastern fringes. In addition, the Dorset AONB runs along the southern boundary of South Somerset, from south of Chard to south of Yeovil.

A national study identifies parts of five National Character Areas (NCAs) in South Somerset, with the majority of the district falling within NCA 140: ‘Yeovil Scarplands’.⁸⁵

NCA 140: Yeovil Scarplands is summarised as:

“The Yeovil Scarplands run, in an arc, from the Mendip Hills around the southern edge of the Mid Somerset Hills and the Somerset Levels and Moors to the fringes of the Blackdowns. This remote, rural landscape comprises a series of broad ridges and steep scarps separating sheltered clay vales. Less than 5 per cent of the area is urban, though Yeovil, lying in the south of the area, has grown to become a sizeable town with a busy industrial zone. The area has a long history of settlement reflected through the archaeology, from Neolithic hill forts, through Roman villas, to remnant medieval

⁸³ Somerset Biodiversity Partnership’s Priority Species List.

⁸⁴ Somerset’s Ecological Networks, Somerset County Council, Somerset Wildlife Trust et al, 2015

⁸⁵ National Character Areas, Natural England. <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/587130>

open fields – along with many Listed Buildings. The area is known for its collection of fine manor houses and associated parklands. The area also boasts a variety of limestones and sandstones from which distinctive local settlement character is derived. Foremost among these is the Ham Hill stone: Stoke-sub-Hamdon, South Petherton and the notable Elizabethan Montacute House are all constructed principally from this stone.”

Small parts of the east of the district fall into **NCA 133: Blackmore Vale and Vale of Wardour**, which is summarised as:

“The Blackmore Vale and Vale of Wardour National Character Area (NCA) comprises both the large expanse of lowland clay vale and the Upper Greensand terraces and hills that mark the southern and eastern edges of the NCA, and an area extending northwards from Penselwood around the edge of the Salisbury Plain and West Wiltshire Downs NCA. The Blackmore Vale, steeped in a long history of pastoral agriculture, is characterised by hedged fields with an abundance of hedgerow trees, many of them veteran. This is productive pastureland that is often waterlogged; it is crossed by streams and several rivers that leave the NCA at all points of the compass.”

Small parts of the north-west of the district fall into **NCA 142: Somerset Levels and Moors**, which is summarised as:

“The Somerset Levels and Moors National Character Area is a flat landscape extending across parts of the north and centre of the historical county of Somerset, reaching from Clevedon near Bristol in the north to Glastonbury in the east and Ilchester and Langport in the south. The Somerset Levels and Moors NCA is dissected by the Mendip Hills NCA and the Mid Somerset Hills NCA, notably the limestone ridge of the Polden Hills. The western boundary is formed by Bridgwater Bay and the Bristol Channel beyond. The landscape blends almost seamlessly into the Vale of Taunton in the south-west and into the Yeovil scarplands to the south. This is a landscape of rivers and wetlands, artificially drained, irrigated and modified to allow productive farming. The coastal Levels were once mostly salt marsh and the meandering rhynes and irregular field patterns follow the former courses of creeks and rivers. They contrast with the open, often treeless, landscape of the inland Moors and their chequer-board-like pattern of rectilinear fields, ditches, rhynes, drains and engineered rivers, and roads. Today, the Levels and Moors have many similarities but their histories are quite distinct. The Levels landscape was probably established by the time of the Norman Conquest while the Moors remained an open waste until enclosure and drainage between 1750 and 1850. Water is an ever-present element in the NCA; water from a catchment area four times the size of the Levels and Moors flows through the area, often above the level of the surrounding land. Much of the area lies below the level of high spring tides in the Bristol Channel.”

Small parts of the south-west of the district fall into **NCA 143: Mid Somerset Hills**, which is summarised as:

“The Mid Somerset Hills form a number of low hills and ridges rising out of the Somerset Levels and Moors. They lie between the Blackdowns National Character Area (NCA) to the south and the Mendip Hills NCA to the north. The hills have a distinctive, predominantly pastoral character rich in hedgerows, farms and small villages, and often with expansive views over the flat Somerset Levels and Moors NCA to the west. Farming is now mixed, but the area was known for its sheep and leather used in connection with the shoe-making industry at Street.”

Small parts of the south of the district fall into **NCA 147: Blackdowns**, which is summarised as:

“Long, dark ridges, deep valleys and dynamic cliffs are the essence of the Blackdowns National Character Area (NCA). The ridges create prominent backdrops from afar and offer far-reaching views. Flat plateaux, large, regular fields and long, straight roads create a sense of openness and uniformity on the ridges. Beech hedgerows and avenues enclose the grazed landscape, although areas of remnant common, lowland heath and scrub still exist, providing open access. Woodland, much of semi-natural origin, dominates the steep valley tops, creating sinuous dark edges to the ridges; some conifer plantations also exist and intrude onto the plateaux. Below the wooded edge pastoral valleys feature with a medieval field pattern of small, irregular fields bounded by dense species-rich hedgebanks and hedgerow trees, creating an enclosed, tranquil setting. A myriad of springs and streams flow south through the valleys and can often be traced by semi-natural habitats: springline mires, rush pasture and carr woodland. Some valley floors widen and provide an opportunity for arable production, notably the Axe Valley which is characterised by a much wider flood plain. The

entire River Axe within the NCA is designated for its biodiversity value, notably lamprey and bullhead fish.”

A detailed local landscape assessment⁹⁷ identified seven visual character regions in South Somerset, described as recognisable and distinct units based on topography and geology:⁸⁶

- Fivehead and High Ham escarpments, valleys and moors;
- Blackdown Hills plateau escarpment footslopes and valleys;
- Windwhistle ridge footslopes and valleys;
- Ham Hill plateau;
- Yeovil sands escarpments and valleys;
- Ridges and vales south and west of Yeovil;
- Escarpments, ridges and vales east of Yeovil; and
- Central plain, moors and river basins.

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

Without the Plan, key designated landscapes will retain a level of protection in accommodating new development.

However, the mixed and varied natural landscapes and historic townscapes are what help to define South Somerset and mark it out as unique. Without the Early Review of the Local Plan and the ability to plan and coordinate development, both statutory and non-statutory assets would be under greater pressure.

The Early Review of the Local Plan offers a tool or delivery mechanism for extended protection of these key assets, for example policy protection for non-designated assets, or protection against coalescence; thus reducing the risk of loss, or detriment to, factors affecting landscape character. The Plan can also coordinate opportunity and investment across the whole of the plan area to ensure that development delivers the best possible, high quality, and multifunctional benefits.

Without the Early Review of the Local Plan future development has an increased likelihood of resulting in negative effects on landscape character, and a decreased likelihood of delivering coordinated and prioritised improvements.

With changing agricultural practices, the Early Review of the Local Plan can also provide a flexible policy approach to agricultural land management and appropriately monitor the effects of the changes in the industry and its implications for the landscape. This includes taking account of the status of land under the terms of the Agricultural Land Classification and the notion of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land.

Although Local Plan policy EQ2 provides a series of design and general development principles, there is not a policy specifically relating to landscape. Therefore the Early Review of Local can consider incorporating a policy on landscape character.

Historic Environment

Summary of current baseline

South Somerset District Council has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance the historic environment. The Council recognises that the historic environment in South Somerset is one of our most important resources, and is part of what makes South Somerset unique and treasured.

The breadth of heritage and historic assets in the district represents both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge is how best to provide appropriate protection to the large number of different assets, ensuring they are secured for the long term; the opportunity is to maximise the contribution these assets make to the economic, cultural and social make-up of South Somerset.

The varied landscapes of South Somerset have provided a wide range of environments which have been exploited, settled and managed by people over many thousands of years. People have left the

⁸⁶ The Landscape of South Somerset, SSDC, 1993.

evidence of their activities as a built and archaeological record made up of the routes and settlements, earthworks and manmade landscapes that form our present-day historic environment.

The physical character of the area is heavily influenced by underlying geology, composed mainly of Jurassic clays, sands and limestones; it has created landforms of wide clays vales or rolling lowland with occasional hilly outcrops of limestone. The central lowlands form part of the peat moor grazing lands that extend out northwestwards into the Somerset Levels with their characteristic long vistas and rectilinear drainage patterns. The Oolitic limestones of the south-east part of the district form part of the limestone belt that runs away north through the Cotswolds and beyond. Here the availability of good quality building stones has given us the rich legacy of fine stone buildings so distinctive to the area.

In terms of designated and non-designated assets, South Somerset has the following records:

- Conservation Areas: Over 80 Conservation Areas, with revisions and modifications occurring where appropriate as part of a rolling profile of work.
- Historic Parks and Gardens: South Somerset is richly endowed with rural parks and includes 14 entries on the national register. Several other parks are of special local importance.
- Registered Battlefields: The only site in South Somerset is that relating to the battle of Langport of 1645.
- Listed Buildings: There are over 4,600 entries on the lists for South Somerset, covering an estimated 5,000 buildings and structures. It is estimated that 3.5% of dwellings in South Somerset are listed, a relatively high number reflecting the richness of the district's heritage.
- Scheduled Ancient Monuments: There are 70 Scheduled Monuments in South Somerset along with many other areas, particularly in towns and villages, identified as being of High Archaeological Potential where investigations are required before development may take place.

There are 28 records on Historic England's "Heritage at Risk Register". These include 15 churches and religious premises, a series of former industrial sites, and domestic properties. Four of the records fall within the priority category "A", which signifies that the asset is under *"Immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric; no solution agreed"*.

The four assets are:

- Church of St Nicholas, Bratton Seymour;
- Church of All Saints, Isle Brewers;
- Church of St Martin of Tours, Church Street, West Coker; and
- Two monuments in churchyard, approximately six and eight metres south of south transept, St Mary the Virgin, East Stoke, Stoke Sub Hamdon.

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

Without the Early Review of the Local Plan the historic environment in South Somerset will still retain a high level of protection, due to the statutory legislation and the adopted South Somerset Local Plan policy.

But, the Council is mindful that the nature of South Somerset is such that there are many non-designated assets, heritage settings and potential archaeology that could be more vulnerable to the impacts of development.

Perhaps more importantly, and emphasised by the Council recently approving a Supplementary Planning Document relating to the historic environment, there is a need to ensure that future development positively enhances the historic environment, and to utilise the historic assets (both designated and non-designated) to deliver higher quality development in the district.

Minerals and Waste

Summary of current baseline

Minerals

Minerals issues are managed and planned for by Somerset County Council as the Minerals Planning Authority. The Somerset Minerals Plan (2015) sets out a policy framework for sustainable minerals development up to 2030. South Somerset has a number of mineral safeguarding areas. The majority of these are linked to areas of search for building stone, as well as some areas of search for sand and gravel. South Somerset is also home to a number of active, dormant, and inactive quarry sites.

Waste

Since 2000, total household waste production in Somerset has been falling despite a growing population and more households. The amount of waste being recycled increased significantly between 2000 and 2008, but has remained stable since then. Further work is required to increase recycling levels in order to achieve the ambitions in the Waste Core Strategy.⁸⁷

Somerset Waste Partnership publish an 'end use register' which details what happens to materials collected for recycling and reuse from Somerset residents which shows that, in 2012/13, 96% of recyclable waste was recycled in the UK, with only 4% sent overseas for recycling. The bulk of food waste, garden waste, and wood waste collected in Somerset is also managed at facilities or locations within Somerset. Indeed, all household food waste collected for recycling in Somerset is processed at a new anaerobic digestion plant at Walpole near Bridgwater, close to junction 23 of the M5.⁸⁸ It would be impractical and unrealistic to plan for sufficient infrastructure in Somerset to reprocess all material streams (plastic, glass etc).⁸⁹

South Somerset is home to two of the three landfill sites for disposing non-hazardous material in Somerset: at Dimmer near Castle Cary; and at Whiscombe Hill near Somerton. The majority of household and commercial/industrial waste that is received at Somerset's waste facilities goes to Walpole (outside of South Somerset) and Dimmer landfill sites.⁹⁰ Dimmer landfill currently accepts around 110,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) of waste (60,000 tpa of municipal and 40,000 tpa of C&I), and has capacity for approximately 20 more years.⁹¹

In 2014/15, the total waste arisings in South Somerset was 740kg per household, of which the residual household waste was 406kg per household. The amount of residual waste produced is lower than the regional and national average. The proportion of household waste being re-used, recycled or composted in South Somerset is 45%, which is broadly similar to other districts in Somerset, and the regional (49%) and national average (44%).⁹²

There are numerous operational waste sites in South Somerset, with the full list is set out in SCC's waste topic paper and updated in their Annual Monitoring. The current municipal waste and recycling infrastructure facilities are set out below. The three largest settlements in the district benefit from a facility.

In terms of waste collection, land at Lufton Depot, Yeovil is leased to park 13 refuse collection vehicles. Any changes to the number of vehicles supplied or increase in processing capacity are catered for within the Waste Collection Contract.

The South Somerset Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016) indicates that the current waste and recycling facilities, and collection vehicles, are adequate in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility. However, a proposal has recently been granted permission (June 2015) (subject to completing a S106 agreement) for a Waste Transfer Station at Dimmer.

The WTS will handle household waste and commercial waste, with Dimmer landfill likely to be closed for the infilling of this waste (subject to planning approval). The waste that is currently landfilled at

⁸⁷ Somerset Waste Core Strategy, Table 1 states there should be capacity for recycling 62% of Municipal Solid Waste by 2016.

⁸⁸ Somerset Waste Partnership: <http://www.somersetwaste.gov.uk/about/ad/>

⁸⁹ Somerset Waste Core Strategy (2013)

⁹⁰ SCC Topic Paper – Waste Management Need to 2028 (2012).

⁹¹ Dimmer WTS planning application officer report:

<http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/council/board11/Web%20upload%2003.06.15/2015%20June%2011%20Item%206%20Waste%20Transfer%20Station%20at%20Dimmer%20Waste%20disposal%20site.pdf>

⁹² Report for Somerset Waste Board meeting, Appendix A1, (2015)

Dimmer would be diverted to the WTS where it will be bulked up for export to treatment/processing facilities to recover energy from the waste.⁹³

This will divert much of the residual municipal waste produced in South Somerset away from landfill (although treatment of this waste would not occur in Somerset as it will be transported to facilities in Oxfordshire and Avonmouth). The funding of this facility will be provided by Somerset County Council and/or a private contractor once the submitted diversion strategy has been assessed, and the future model agreed with partner authorities through the Somerset Waste Board. At present, the existing waste and recycling capacity in South Somerset is sufficient to meet the future development being proposed. If the average of 4.8 visits to recycling centres per household in 2013-14 were to be applied to projected development over the next five years, there would be an 8.3% increase in the use of recycling centres by 2019.

Evolution without the Early Review of the Local Plan

The management of waste and minerals development in South Somerset is planned by Somerset County Council through their Minerals Plan and their Waste Core Strategy. As at May 2016, Somerset County Council has set out a Minerals and Waste Development Scheme setting out the timetable for producing a joined-up development plan that addresses both topics in one document.

To this extent the Early Review of the Local Plan will only have a small bearing on SCC's plans. However, the Council will need to be mindful of the potential sterilising effect that the scale and location of homes, jobs, and development could have on minerals sites.

New housing and employment development should also consider the implications of its waster production and management, and should plan for sustainable waste management to help achieve the aims of the Waste Plan.

Minerals and waste can affect human health through noise pollution and odour, and as such the Early Review of the Local Plan provides the opportunity to plan for development that minimises these effects.

⁹³ Dimmer WTS planning application officer report:
<http://www1.somerset.gov.uk/council/board11/Web%20upload%2003.06.15/2015%20June%2011%20Item%206%20Waste%20Transfer%20Station%20at%20Dimmer%20Waste%20disposal%20site.pdf>

Appendix III: SA of site options

Developing the appraisal methodology

Given the number of site options and limited site-specific data availability it was not possible to simply discuss ('qualitative analysis') the merits of each site option under the SA framework.⁹⁴

As such, work was undertaken to develop a methodology suited to site options appraisal, whilst also reflecting the SA framework and topics as best as possible. The methodology essentially involved employing GIS data-sets, and measuring ('quantitative analysis') how each site option related to various constraint and opportunity features.

Two GIS tools were used to undertake the appraisal of site options depending on the feature and measurements required. These provided either a:

- Straight line distance from a feature to a site option and percentage overlap of any features within a site option. Measurements were taken from the closest boundary of the site option and the feature.
- or
- Distances calculated from a site option to a feature along a real world network of roads and urban footpaths using Open Street Map. The network analyst tool helps to provide approximate real-world walking distances. Measurements are taken from the boundary of the site where it is within 20m of the road/ footpath network and is therefore assumed to have access.

The site options appraisal methodology is presented in **Table AIII.1** below. It sets out the criteria and thresholds as well as the GIS tool used and provides further commentary as necessary. The table recognises data limitations. It is important to be clear that the aim of categorising the performance of site options is to aid differentiation, i.e. to highlight instances of site options performing relatively well/ poorly. The intention is not to indicate a 'significant effect'.⁹⁵

⁹⁴ Qualitative analysis of site options would only have been possible were time/resources available to generate data/understanding for all site options through site visits and discussion with promoters. Without this data/understanding, any attempt at qualitative analysis would have led to a risk of bias (e.g. sites that are being proactively promoted may have been found to perform favourably).

⁹⁵ Whilst Regulations require that the SA process identifies and evaluates significant effects of the draft plan and reasonable alternatives, there is no assumption that significant effects must be identified and evaluated for all site options considered.

Table AIII.1: Site options appraisal methodology

Criteria	'RAG' rules	Data and measurement	Commentary
Intersects with best and most versatile agricultural land?	<p>R = Majority of the site contains best and most versatile agricultural land</p> <p>A = Majority of the site is agricultural land</p> <p>G = Majority of the site is brownfield land</p>	Data provided by SSDC and Natural England. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	Highlights site options that contain agricultural land and in particular best and most versatile (Grades 1, 2 and 3a) agricultural land.
Proximity to an area of archaeological importance?	<p>A = Intersects or is adjacent</p> <p>G = Distant</p>	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	It is assumed that any development within an area of archaeological importance is more likely to contain archaeology. This does not mean that sites outside these areas cannot contain archaeology and this would be investigated further through any planning applications.
Proximity to a Conservation Area?	<p>R = Intersects or is adjacent</p> <p>A = <50m</p> <p>G = >50m</p>	Data provided by SSDC and does not include Conservation Areas outside the District. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	<p>It is appropriate to 'flag' a red where a site is within, intersects or is adjacent to a Conservation Area. It is also appropriate to flag sites that might more widely impact on the setting of a Conservation Area and a 50m threshold has been assumed. It is recognised that distance in itself is not a definitive guide to the likelihood or significance of effects on a heritage asset. It is also recognised that the historic environment encompasses more than just designated heritage assets.</p> <p>Whilst there is good potential to highlight where development in proximity to a heritage asset might impact negatively on that asset, or its setting, a limitation relates to the fact that it has not been possible to gather views from heritage specialists on sensitivity of assets / capacity to develop each of the sites. This is a notable limitation as potential for development to conflict with the setting of historic assets / local historic character can only really be considered on a case-by-case basis rather than through a distance based criteria. It will also sometimes be the case that development can enhance heritage assets.</p>
Proximity to a Historic Park or Garden?	<p>R = <300m</p> <p>A = <1km</p> <p>G = >1km</p>	Data provided by Historic England and includes assets lying outside of the Borough. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	As above.
Proximity to a listed building?	<p>R = Intersects or is adjacent</p> <p>A = <50m</p>	Data provided by Historic England and includes assets lying	As above.

Criteria	'RAG' rules	Data and measurement	Commentary
	G = >50m	outside of the District. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	
Proximity to a Scheduled Monument?	R = <100 A = <500m G = >500m	Data provided by Historic England and includes assets lying outside of the District. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	As above.
Intersects with a flood zone?	R = > 50% intersects with Flood risk zone 2 or 3 A = < 50% intersects with Flood risk zone 2 or 3 G = Flood risk zone 1	Data provided by the Environment Agency. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	This criterion will help to identify sites that fall within high flood risk areas. N.B. While it is important to avoid development in flood zones, there is the potential to address flood risk at the development management stage, when a 'sequential approach' can be taken to ensure that uses are compatible with flood risk. There is also the potential to design-in Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
Proximity to a Local Wildlife Site (LWS)?	R = Includes or is adjacent A = <50m G = >50m	Data provided by SSDC and includes sites lying outside of the District. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	There are a number of LWSs situated within the District and the RAG distances reflect this along with the assumption that these are of less significance and therefore less sensitive than internationally and nationally designated biodiversity.
Proximity to a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)?	R = <200m A = 200 - 800m G = >800m	Data provided by Natural England and includes sites lying outside of the District. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	The data for SSSIs is provided by NE and includes sites lying outside of the Borough. NE has defined SSSI Impact Risk Zones for SSSIs. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts. Given the presence of SSSIs within and surrounding the District impact risk zones cover the entire plan area. The RAG distances have been selected to take account of this and help differentiate between the sites options. It is recognised that distance in itself is not a definitive guide to the likelihood or significance of effects on a SSSI. This will be dependent on a variety of information, some of which is not available at this stage, such as the precise scale, type, design and layout of development as well as level of mitigation to be provided.
Proximity to a Special Protection Area, Special Area of	R = <400m A = <2km G = >2km	Data provided by Natural England and includes sites lying outside of the District. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	It is recognised that distance in itself is not a definitive guide to the likelihood or significance of effects on a European site. This will be dependent on a variety of information, some of which is not available at this stage, such as the precise scale, type, design and layout of development as well as level of mitigation to be provided. It is also

Criteria	'RAG' rules	Data and measurement	Commentary
Conservation or Ramsar site?			important to note that the Local Plan will be subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment and this will consider the likelihood of proposed development having a significant effect on European sites.
Proximity to a priority habitat?	R = Includes or is adjacent A = <50m G = >50m	Data provided by Natural England and includes sites lying outside of the District. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	Seeks to flag if a development at a site could result in the loss of and therefore fragmentation of priority habitats. It also helps to flag if there is the potential for disturbance to priority habitats within 50m of the site.
Intersects with an area considered through landscape sensitivity work?	R = Site is identified as having low capacity to accommodate development A = Site is identified as having moderate or moderate to low capacity to accommodate development Includes or is adjacent G = Majority of site is identified as having moderate to high or high capacity to accommodate development	Data provided by SSDC. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	<p>Landscape sensitivity work carried out by the Council for each settlement identified the capacity of areas to accommodate development.</p> <p>Not all sites intersect with a landscape sensitivity area considered through the landscape sensitivity work. Where a site does not intersect a landscape sensitivity area, a grey colour will denote this.</p>
Is the site within an area that suffers from problems of overall deprivation?	R = Site does not intersect with an 'output area' that is relatively deprived A = Any of the site intersects with an 'output area' that is relatively deprived i.e. in the 20-40% (2nd quintile) most deprived in the District. G = Any of the site intersects with an 'output area' that is relatively deprived (i.e. in the 0-20% (1st quintile) most deprived in the District	Data provided by Department for Communities and Local Government and includes features outside the District. Straight line distance/ overlap measurement.	Highlights site options that fall within an area of deprivation. Development in an area of relative deprivation (as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation) may support regeneration. However, it is recognised that this will be dependent on a variety of factors, including the level of improvements delivered in terms of community facilities.
Proximity to an employment area?	R = >800m A = 400-800m G = <400m	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights walking distance to existing employment areas. There is no clear guidance on distance thresholds, and it is recognised that these facilities will often be reached by car or public transport. The thresholds therefore reflect the spread of the data.

Criteria	'RAG' rules	Data and measurement	Commentary
Proximity to a town centre?	R = >800m A = 400-800m G = <400m	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights walking distance to town centres. There is no clear guidance on distance thresholds, and it is recognised that town centres will often be reached by car or public transport. The thresholds therefore reflect the spread of the data.
Proximity to important open areas?	R = >800m A = 400-800m G = <400m	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights the walking distance of site options to important areas of open space, including Nature Reserves, CROW access land and Country Parks. It is recognised that there may be other areas of open or green space that are not considered through this criterion. 400m is assumed to be a walkable distance for most.
Proximity to a bus stop?	R = >400m G = <400m	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights walking distance to a bus stop. Department for Transport guidance ⁹⁶ suggests 400m as a walkable distance for those accessing a bus stop. It is recognised that the frequency of service is also extremely important. This information will be incorporated into this appraisal in due course as part of the iterative SA process.
Proximity to a train station?	A = >800m G = <800m	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights walking distance to a train station. Department for Transport guidance ⁹⁷ does not suggest a walkable distance for a train station so it is assumed that 800m is appropriate. This is in line with what is suggested for access to community facilities.
Proximity to a convenience shop?	R = >800m A = 400-800m G = <400m	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights walking distance to a convenience shop. Department for Transport guidance ⁹⁸ suggests 800m as a walkable distance for those accessing community facilities.
Proximity to a GPs/Health centres/ hospitals?	R = >800m A = 400-800m G = <400m	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights walking distance to GPs/health centres/ hospitals. Department for Transport guidance ⁹⁹ suggests 800m as a walkable distance for those accessing community facilities.
Proximity to a primary school?	R = >3.2km A = <3.2km G = <1km	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights walking distance to primary schools. Thresholds reflect the statutory walking distances set out in Education Act (1996) and the Home to school travel and transport guidance (2014).

⁹⁶ WebTag (December 2015) Unit A4.2 paragraph 6.4.5, Department for Transport.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Ibid.

Criteria	'RAG' rules	Data and measurement	Commentary
Proximity to any school?	R = >4.8km A = <4.8km G = <1km	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights walking distance to any school other than a primary school. Thresholds reflect the statutory walking distances set out in Education Act (1996) and the Home to school travel and transport guidance (2014).
Proximity to a leisure centre?	R = >800m A = 400-800m G = <400m	Data provided by SSDC and does not include features outside the District. Network analyst measurement.	Highlights walking distance to a leisure centre. Department for Transport guidance ¹⁰⁰ suggests 800m as a walkable distance for those accessing community facilities.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

Appraisal findings

Table AIII.2 presents appraisal findings in relation to the site options that have been a focus of plan-making. Specifically, the table presents an appraisal of the site options in terms of the appraisal criteria set out in **Table AIII.1**, with performance categorised on a simple 'RAG' scale.

Table AIII.1: Site options appraisal findings

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
E/ILCH/0100																										
E/ILCH/0101																										
E/ILCH/0102																										
N/ASHO/0100																										
N/CUMA/0101																										
N/CUMA/0102																										
N/CUMA/0103																										
N/CUMA/0104																										
N/CUMA/0105																										
N/HIHA/0100																										
N/HUEP/0100																										
N/SEMA/0100																										
N/SOME/0100																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
N/STHA/0100																										
N/STHA/0101																										
N/STHA/0102																										
N/STHA/0103																										
N/STHA/0104																										
N/STHA/0105																										
N/STHA/0107																										
S/WECO/0100																										
S/WECO/0102																										
S/YEOV/0100																										
S/YEOV/0103																										
S/YEOV/0104																										
S/YEOV/0105																										
S/YEOV/0109																										
W/ILMI/0102																										
W/TAFO/0102																										
E/ANSF/0001																										
E/BADA/0008																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
E/BADA/0009																										
E/BADA/0010																										
E/BRUT/0006																										
E/HENS/0006 (Inc. E/HENS/0002 E/HENS/0003)																										
E/ILCH/0002																										
E/ILCH/0002																										
E/KEMA/0007																										
E/KEMA/0008																										
E/KEMA/0017																										
E/MUDF/0007																										
E/NOCA/0002																										
E/NOCA/0003																										
E/WINC/0023																										
E/WINC/0023																										
E/WINC/0027																										
E/WINC/0028																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
E/YEOT/0001																										
N/CURI/0003																										
N/LOPE/0001																										
N/LOPE/0002																										
N/LOPE/0002																										
N/LOSU/0003																										
N/SOME/0011																										
N/SOPE/0013																										
N/SOPE/0014																										
N/STHA/0003																										
S/EACO/0008																										
S/EACO/0009																										
S/EACO/0010																										
S/EACO/0011																										
S/EACO/0012																										
S/EACO/0013																										
S/WECO/0015																										
S/WECO/0020																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
S/YEOV/0005																										
S/YEOV/0006																										
S/YEOV/0007																										
S/YEOV/0008																										
S/YEOV/1302																										
S/YEWI/0005																										
S/YEWI/0010																										
S/YEWI/0011																										
S/YEWI/0012																										
W/DONY/0001																										
W/DONY/0001																										
W/DONY/0001																										
W/DONY/0001																										
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Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
W/DONY/0001																										
W/DONY/0001																										
W/DONY/0001																										
W/MERR/0014																										
E/ANSF/0007																										
E/ANSF/0008																										
E/BRUT/0006																										
E/BRUT/0008																										
E/ILCH/0002																										
E/MIPO/0015																										
E/MIPO/0023																										
E/WINC/0003																										
E/WINC/0007																										
E/WINC/0023																										
N/HUEP/0010																										
N/HUEP/0011																										
N/MART/0010/B																										
N/MART/0037																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
N/MART/0039	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/SOME/0008	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
N/SOME/0014	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
N/SOPE/0001/10	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green
N/SOPE/0008	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green
S/EACO/0022	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
S/YEOV/0005	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green
S/YEOV/0006	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
S/YEOV/0008	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Red
S/YEWI/0003	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
S/YEWI/0003 and S/YEWI/0001	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
S/YEWI/0004	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green
S/YEWI/0012	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red
Unknown	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red
Unknown	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
W/CHAR/0002	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red
W/CHAR/0020	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
W/CREW/0003																										
W/CREW/0012																										
W/CREW/0024																										
W/CREW/0029																										
W/ILMI/0009/B																										
W/ILMI/0022																										
W/ILMI/0301																										
E/ABTE/0004																										
E/ABTE/0007																										
E/ABTE/0013																										
E/ANSF/0007																										
E/ANSF/0008																										
E/ANSF/0009																										
E/ANSF/0010																										
E/ANSF/0011																										
E/ANSF/0500																										
E/BADA/0004																										
E/BADA/0006																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
E/BADA/0009																										
E/BADA/0010																										
E/BRUT/0002																										
E/BRUT/0006																										
E/BRUT/0008																										
E/CACA/1101																										
E/CHHO/0001																										
E/CHMA/0002																										
E/CHMA/0003																										
E/CHMA/0004																										
E/CUCK/0001																										
E/HENS/0001																										
E/KEMA/0001/10																										
E/KEMA/0008																										
E/KEMA/0013																										
E/LOVI/0001																										
E/LOVI/0002																										
E/MAMA/0002																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
E/MAMA/0003																										
E/MIPO/0003																										
E/MIPO/0014																										
E/MIPO/0015																										
E/MIPO/0800																										
E/MUDF/0001/10																										
E/MUDF/0002																										
E/MUDF/0003																										
E/MUDF/0004																										
E/MUDF/0009																										
E/NOCA/0001																										
E/NOCA/0002																										
E/NOCA/0003																										
E/QUCA/0001/C																										
E/SPAR/0001																										
E/SPAR/0003																										
E/SPAR/0004																										
E/SPAR/0005																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
E/SPAR/0006																										
E/WINC/0002																										
E/WINC/0003																										
E/WINC/0004																										
E/WINC/0007																										
E/WINC/0018																										
E/WINC/0019																										
E/WINC/0020																										
E/WINC/0022																										
E/WINC/0023																										
N/BARR/0003																										
N/CURI/0003																										
N/HUEP/0002																										
N/HUEP/0010																										
N/HUEP/0011																										
N/ILTO/1101																										
N/LOPE/0001																										
N/LOPE/0003																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
N/LOPE/0004																										
N/LOPE/0005																										
N/LOPE/0008																										
N/MART/0005																										
N/MART/0010/B																										
N/MART/0013																										
N/MART/0032																										
N/MART/0035																										
N/MART/0037																										
N/MART/0039																										
N/NOHA/0502																										
N/SHBE/0001																										
N/SHBE/0002																										
N/SOME/0002																										
N/SOME/0006																										
N/SOME/0007																										
N/SOME/0008																										
N/SOME/0014																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
N/SOME/0800																										
N/SOPE/0001/10																										
N/SOPE/0008																										
N/SOPE/0016																										
N/STHA/0002																										
N/TINT/0004																										
S/BRYM/0004																										
S/BRYM/0005																										
S/BRYM/0008																										
S/BRYM/0009																										
S/BRYM/0011																										
S/BRYM/0501																										
S/BRYM/1101																										
S/BRYM/1102																										
S/EACO/0003																										
S/EACO/0004/10																										
S/EACO/0007																										
S/EACO/0020																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
S/EACO/0021																										
S/EACO/0022																										
S/EACO/0024																										
S/EACO/0025																										
S/EACO/0027																										
S/ODCO/1101																										
S/WECO/0004																										
S/WECO/0009																										
S/WECO/0011																										
S/WECO/0014																										
S/WECO/0015																										
S/WECO/0016																										
S/WECO/0018																										
S/WECO/0019																										
S/YEOV/0003																										
S/YEOV/0005																										
S/YEOV/0006																										
S/YEOV/0007																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
S/YEOV/0008																										
S/YEOV/1300																										
S/YEOV/1302																										
S/YEOV/1303																										
S/YEWI/0001																										
S/YEWI/0003																										
S/YEWI/0004																										
S/YEWI/0006																										
S/YEWI/0007																										
S/YEWI/0008																										
S/YEWI/0011																										
S/YEWI/0012																										
S/YEWI/0500																										
W/ASHI/0001																										
W/BROA/0004																										
W/BROA/0007																										
W/CHAR/0002																										
W/CHAR/0005																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
W/CHAR/0011																										
W/CHAR/0012																										
W/CHAR/0013																										
W/CHAR/0014																										
W/CHAR/0015																										
W/CHAR/0017																										
W/CHAR/0019																										
W/CHAR/0020																										
W/CHAR/0021																										
W/CHAR/0022																										
W/CONI/0001																										
W/CONI/0002																										
W/CREW/0003																										
W/CREW/0006																										
W/CREW/0012																										
W/CREW/0015																										
W/CREW/0024																										
W/CREW/0026																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
W/CREW/0027																										
W/CREW/0028																										
W/CREW/0029																										
W/CREW/0030																										
W/DONY/0100																										
W/DONY/0101																										
W/DONY/0102																										
W/HAPL/0001																										
W/HORT/0004																										
W/HORT/0100																										
W/ILMI/0002																										
W/ILMI/0004																										
W/ILMI/0005																										
W/ILMI/0009/B																										
W/ILMI/0019																										
W/ILMI/0020																										
W/ILMI/0021																										
W/ILMI/0022																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
W/ILMI/0301																										
W/MERR/0006																										
W/MERR/0011																										
W/MERR/0012																										
W/MERR/0014																										
W/MERR/0015																										
W/MIST/1200																										
W/TAFO/0101																										
E/ABTE/0001/10																										
E/ABTE/0010																										
E/ABTE/1200																										
E/ALFO/0001																										
E/ANSF/0001																										
E/BADA/0002																										
E/BADA/0003																										
E/BADA/0007																										
E/BADA/0008																										
E/BADA/0011																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
E/BRUT/0003																										
E/BRUT/0007																										
E/BRUT/0009																										
E/CACA/0504																										
E/CACA/0806																										
E/CHMA/0001																										
E/CHMA/0001/10																										
E/COPA/0003																										
E/COPA/0004																										
E/HOLT/0002																										
E/ILCH/0001/10																										
E/ILCH/0002																										
E/ILCH/0002/10A																										
E/KEMA/0001																										
E/KEMA/0007																										
E/KEMA/0009																										
E/KEMA/0010																										
E/KEMA/0011																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
E/KEMA/0012																										
E/KEMA/0014																										
E/KEMA/0015																										
E/KEMA/0016																										
E/KEMA/0017																										
E/MAMA/0001																										
E/MAMA/0004																										
E/MAPE/0002																										
E/MIPO/0005																										
E/MIPO/0016																										
E/MIPO/0017																										
E/MIPO/0018																										
E/MIPO/0021																										
E/MIPO/0022																										
E/MUDF/0006																										
E/MUDF/0008																										
E/MUDF/0011																										
E/MUDF/0012																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
E/QUCA/0001/A	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
E/QUCA/0001/B	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red
E/QUCA/0002	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
E/QUCA/0003	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
E/SOCA/0003	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
E/SPAR/1200	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
E/STTR/0001/10	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
E/STTR/0002	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
E/WINC/0013	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
E/WINC/0024	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	
E/WINC/0025	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
E/WINC/0026	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
E/WINC/0027	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green
E/WINC/0028	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green
E/WINC/0029	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Red
E/WINC/0522	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Red	Red	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green
E/YEOT/0001	Yellow	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
N/BARR/0002	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
N/BARR/0005																										
N/CHDO/0001																										
N/CURI/0100																										
N/HUEP/0009																										
N/HUEP/0801																										
N/LANG/0001																										
N/LANG/0002																										
N/LOPE/0002																										
N/LOPE/0006																										
N/LOPE/0007																										
N/MART/0001/10																										
N/MART/0002/10																										
N/MART/0003/10																										
N/MART/0004/10																										
N/MART/0007																										
N/MART/0023																										
N/MART/0024																										
N/MART/0025																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
N/MART/0029	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/MART/0030	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
N/MART/0031	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green
N/MART/0033	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/MART/0034	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/MART/0036	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Grey	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/MART/0038	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
N/MART/0101	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/MART/0102	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red
N/MART/0500	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/SOME/0005	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/SOME/0010	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Red	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/SOME/0011	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/SOME/0012	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/SOME/0013	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
N/SOME/0500	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Grey	Red	Red	Green	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Red
N/SOPE/0006/A	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green
N/SOPE/0012	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
N/SOPE/0013																										
N/SOPE/0015																										
N/STHA/0003																										
N/STHA/0004																										
N/STHA/0005																										
S/BRYM/0001/B																										
S/BRYM/0001/C																										
S/BRYM/0002																										
S/BRYM/0006																										
S/BRYM/0007																										
S/BRYM/0013																										
S/BRYM/0014																										
S/BRYM/0015																										
S/BRYM/0016																										
S/EACO/0008																										
S/EACO/0009																										
S/EACO/0010																										
S/EACO/0011																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
S/EACO/0012	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
S/EACO/0013	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
S/EACO/0026	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
S/ODCO/0004	Yellow	Green	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow
S/ODCO/0005	Red	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
SWECO/0007	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red
SWECO/0012/A	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red
SWECO/0012/C	Red	Green	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
SWECO/0012/D	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
SWECO/0012/E	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red
SWECO/0012/F	Red	Green	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Red	Red
SWECO/0012/G	Red	Yellow	Green	Yellow	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
SWECO/0017	Red	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow
SWECO/0020	Red	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
S/YEOV/1304	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Grey	Green	Red	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red	Green	Green	Yellow
S/YEWI/0005	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Green	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
S/YEWI/0010	Red	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Red	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Yellow	Red
W/BROA/0006	Yellow	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Grey	Red	Red	Red	Red	Green	Yellow	Red	Red	Red	Green	Green	Green

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
W/BROA/0008																										
W/BROA/0009																										
W/CHAR/0018																										
W/CHAR/0101																										
W/CHAR/0102																										
W/CREW/0009																										
W/CREW/0022																										
W/CREW/0025																										
W/CREW/0031																										
W/CREW/0032																										
W/CREW/0100																										
W/CREW/0504																										
W/DONY/0001																										
W/DOWA/1101																										
W/EACH/0001																										
W/HORT/0002																										
W/HORT/0003																										
W/HORT/0500																										

Site Reference	Intersects with BMV?	Proximity to Archaeological Site of National Importance	Distance to Conservation Area	Distance to Historic Park and Garden	Distance to Listed Building	Distance to Scheduled Monument	Intersects with Flood Risk Zone?	Distance to Local Wildlife Site	Distance to SSSI	Distance to Ramsar	Distance to SAC	Distance to SPA	Distance to BAP Priority Habitat	Landscape Capacity	Area of Deprivation	Distance to Employment Land	Distance to Town Centre	Distance to open space feature	Distance to Bus Stop	Distance to Train Station	Distance to shop	Distance to GP	Distance to hospital	Distance to Primary School	Distance to any School	Distance to Leisure and Recreational Facility
W/ILMI/0504																										
W/MERR/0010																										
W/TAFO/1200																										

Appendix IV: Settlement growth options

Introduction

As explained within 'Part 1' in the main report (Chapters 4 to 8), a focus of work has been on the development and appraisal of district-wide spatial strategy alternatives, with a view to informing determination of the preferred strategy.

An interim step was necessary in order to establish district-wide spatial strategy options; this involved a review of the evidence associated with the higher tier settlements in order to identify if there are any realistic growth options. If realistic choices in terms of the direction/ location of growth at the settlements were identified, then these were subject to an appraisal against the SA Framework.

This appendix sets out the findings of this work and is structured as follows:

- Methodology;
- Principal Town;
- Primary Market Towns;
- Local Market Towns;
- Rural Centres; and
- Summary findings.

Methodology

The consideration of growth options for settlements is focussed on the higher tier settlements that are more likely to be able to accommodate larger-scale growth. These are considered to be the Principal Town, Primary Market Towns, Local Market Towns and Rural Centres. While the villages and rural settlements were not given detailed consideration the potential for more or less growth at these settlements will be explored through district-wide spatial strategy alternatives. The settlements being considered are set out in the table below.

Table IV2: Higher order settlements considered

Principal Town	
Yeovil	
Primary Market Towns	
Chard	Ilminster
Crewkerne	Wincanton
Local Market Towns	
Ansford and Castle Cary	Somerton
Langport and Huish Episcopi	
Rural Centres	
Bruton	Milborne Port
Ilchester	South Petherton
Martock and Bower Hinton	

For each of the settlements identified in the table above, the following is set out:

- Spatial portrait;
- HELAA findings; and
- Identifying options.

Where realistic options for growth are identified then an appraisal was carried out. For each of the options, the assessment examines **likely significant effects** on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability objectives identified through scoping (see Table 3.1 in the main report) as a methodological framework. **Green** is used to indicate significant positive effects, whilst **red** is used to indicate significant negative effects.

Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the options under consideration. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a 'no plan' scenario). In light of this, there is a need to make considerable assumptions regarding how scenarios will be implemented 'on the ground' and what the effect on particular receptors would be. Where there is a need to rely on assumptions in order to reach a conclusion on a 'significant effect' this is made explicit in the appraisal text.

Where it is not possible to predict likely significant effects on the basis of reasonable assumptions, efforts are made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a **rank of preference**. The number indicates the rank and does not have any bearing on likely significant effects. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in terms of 'significant effects'.

The effects are predicted taking into account the criteria presented within Regulations.¹⁰¹ So, for example, account is taken of the duration, frequency and reversibility of effects. Cumulative effects are also considered (i.e. where the effects of the plan in combination with the effects of other planned or on-going activity that is outside the control of the South Somerset District Local Plan Review).

Finally, it is important to note that for the purposes of the appraisal it is assumed that the options identified for a particular settlement could provide the same scale of residential/ employment growth as well as associate improvements to community infrastructure.

¹⁰¹ Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Principal Town

Yeovil

Spatial portrait

Yeovil is by far the largest settlement in South Somerset and is the focus for employment, retail, services and housing in the District. It is located on the south eastern boundary of Somerset, adjacent to the Dorset border and is surrounded by a rural area of smaller market towns and villages.

Yeovil is closely linked to the A303 trunk road, which runs east-west through the District. The A30 and A37 run through the town. There are two mainline railway stations, Yeovil Pen Mill on the Weymouth-Bristol line and Yeovil Junction on the Exeter-London Waterloo line. Neither station is ideally located, Pen Mill is on the eastern edge of the settlement, Yeovil Junction is located two miles to the south. However, there is a regular bus service from the stations to the town centre and Pen Mill has good pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre via an off road path.

Rapid housing development over the last 50 years has now taken Yeovil's population to around 47,780 people. This residential growth has primarily spread north and west of the town centre, absorbing the small hamlets of Preston Plucknett and Alvington, and now extending to the edge of Lufton hamlet to the west and Brimsmore to the north. Development to the southeast has been limited due to a combination of the River Yeo's flood plain, steep hills, and historic homes and estates.

Yeovil plays a significant economic role in the County and is the prime economic driver for South Somerset. The town is the heart of aerospace research, design and manufacture in Somerset with a long history of aircraft manufacture dating back over 100 years. For context, it has 21 times the concentration of employment in aerospace than the national average and consequently there are a high proportion of manufacturing jobs in the town. There are also many jobs in health and social work and retail, but the town is under-represented in private sector services such as banking and finance. It has high levels of self-containment and also high levels of in-commuting.

Yeovil has a range of food and non-food shops with numerous national multiple operators. Some of the key services and cultural activities in the town include Yeovil District Hospital, Yeovil College, the Octagon Theatre, Yeovil Town Football Club, and the refurbished Westland Leisure Complex.

Some of the core town centre functions of Yeovil are currently located elsewhere in the town. For example many offices including the Yeovil Innovation Centre and South Somerset District Council's main office are now located outside of the town centre.

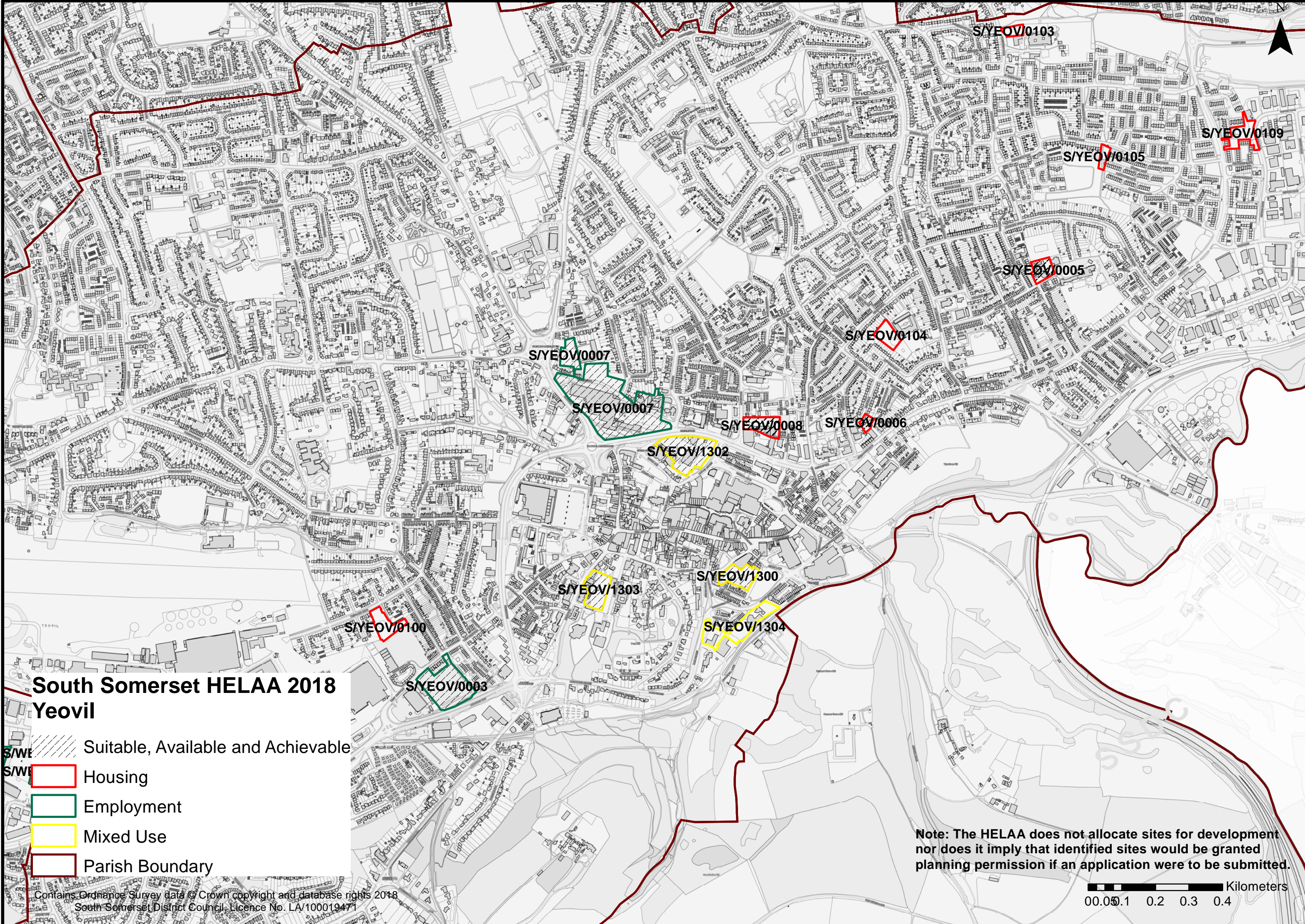
The car currently dominates travel with over 40% of people travelling to work by car or van. So whilst lots of people who live in Yeovil also work in Yeovil, they do not walk, cycle, or use public transport to commute. Although there are some dedicated cycle routes around parts of Yeovil, much of this network is discontinuous meaning that it is difficult to cycle to key destinations across the town, particularly from northern parts of Yeovil. Therefore, key traffic routes across the town suffer from congestion at peak times. Road traffic is the prime cause of poor air quality in parts of Yeovil, which has led to the whole town being designated as an Air Quality Management Area.

Yeovil is located in an attractive rural setting, within a sensitive landscape defined by escarpments to both the north and south. There is a rich historic environment in close proximity to the town, including registered Historic Parks and Gardens, village Conservation Areas and Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Much of the town is surrounded by Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. There are several local wildlife sites and European protected species. The River Yeo flood plain runs






along the eastern edge of the town. The Nine Springs Country Park just to the south of the town centre is a key asset and like much of the historic and natural environment provides tourism opportunities.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.



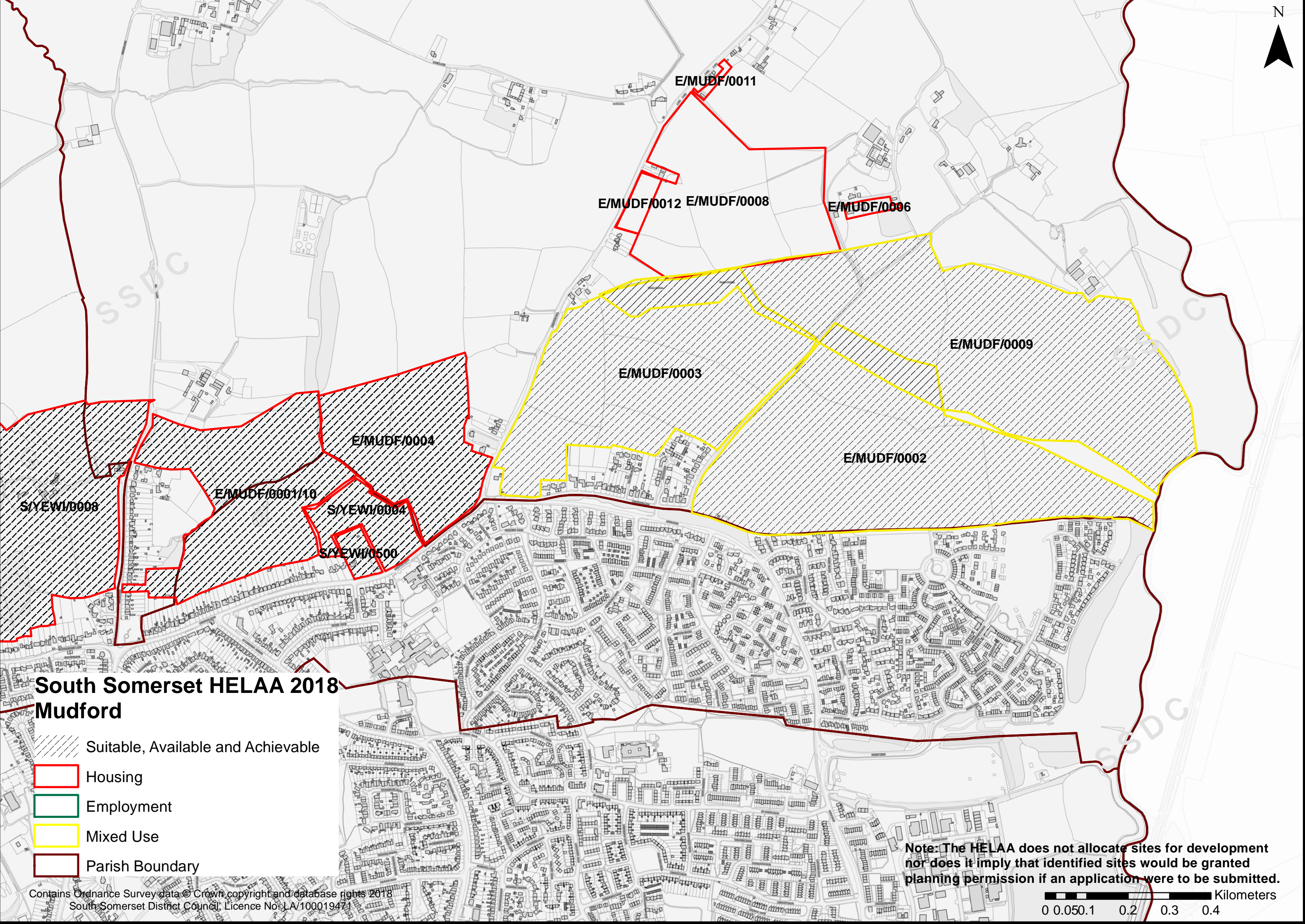
South Somerset HELAA 2018 Yeovil

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary






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Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development
nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted
planning permission if an application were to be submitted.

0.0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Kilometers

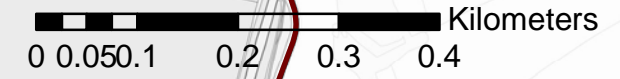


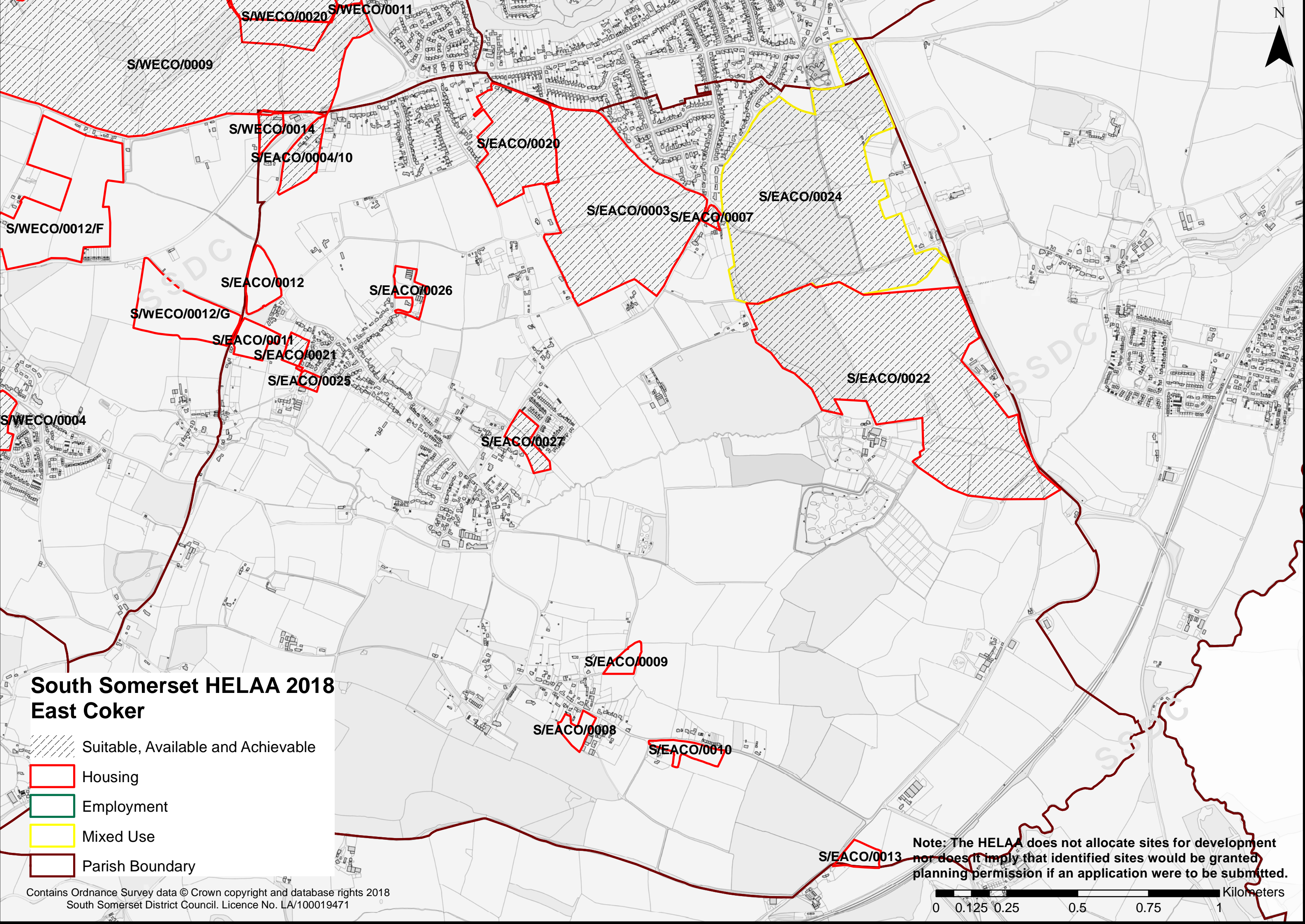
South Somerset HELAA 2018 Mudford

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

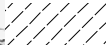




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Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted planning permission if an application were to be submitted.





South Somerset HELAA 2018 East Coker

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary





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Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development
nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted
planning permission if an application were to be submitted.

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Kilometers

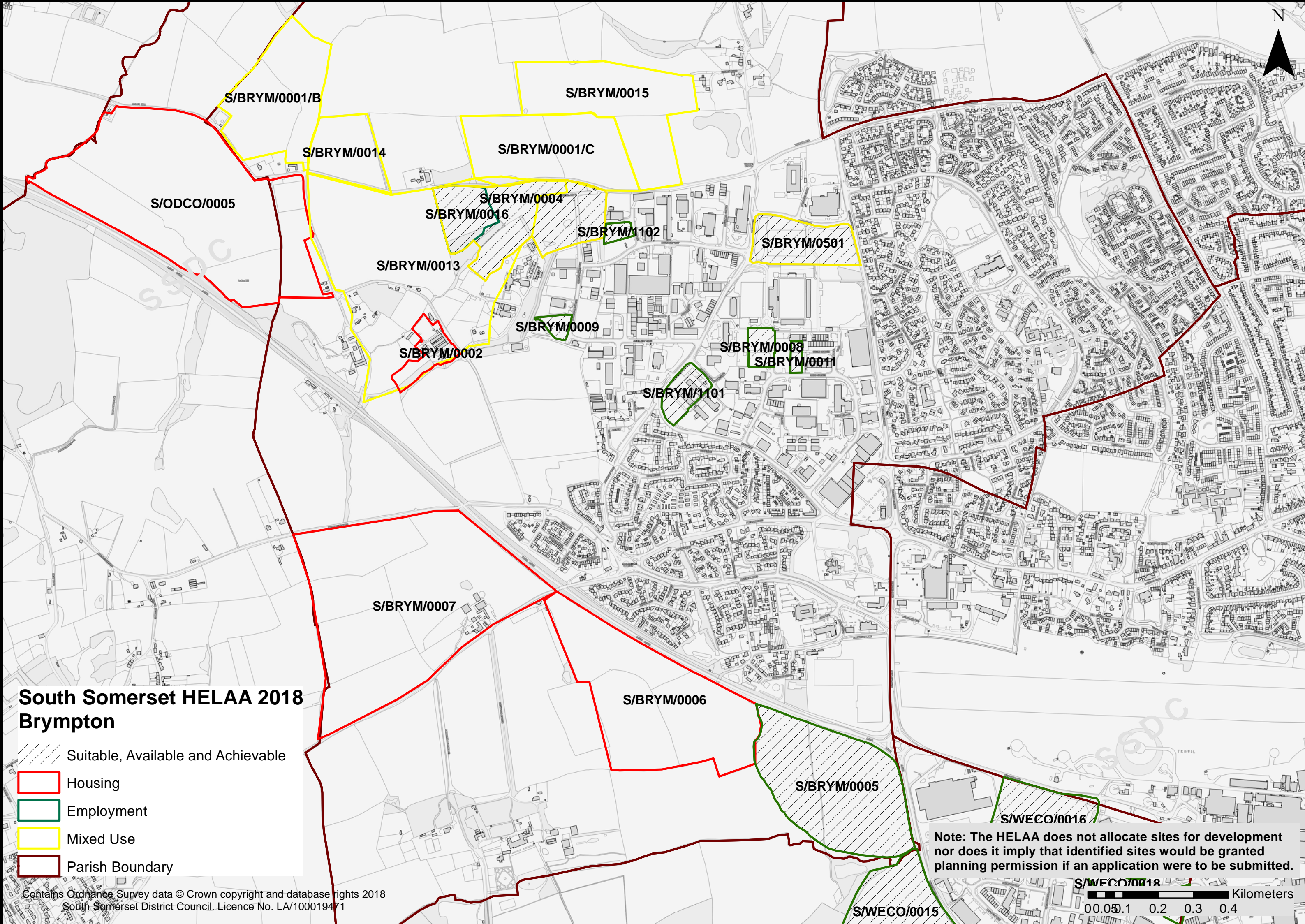


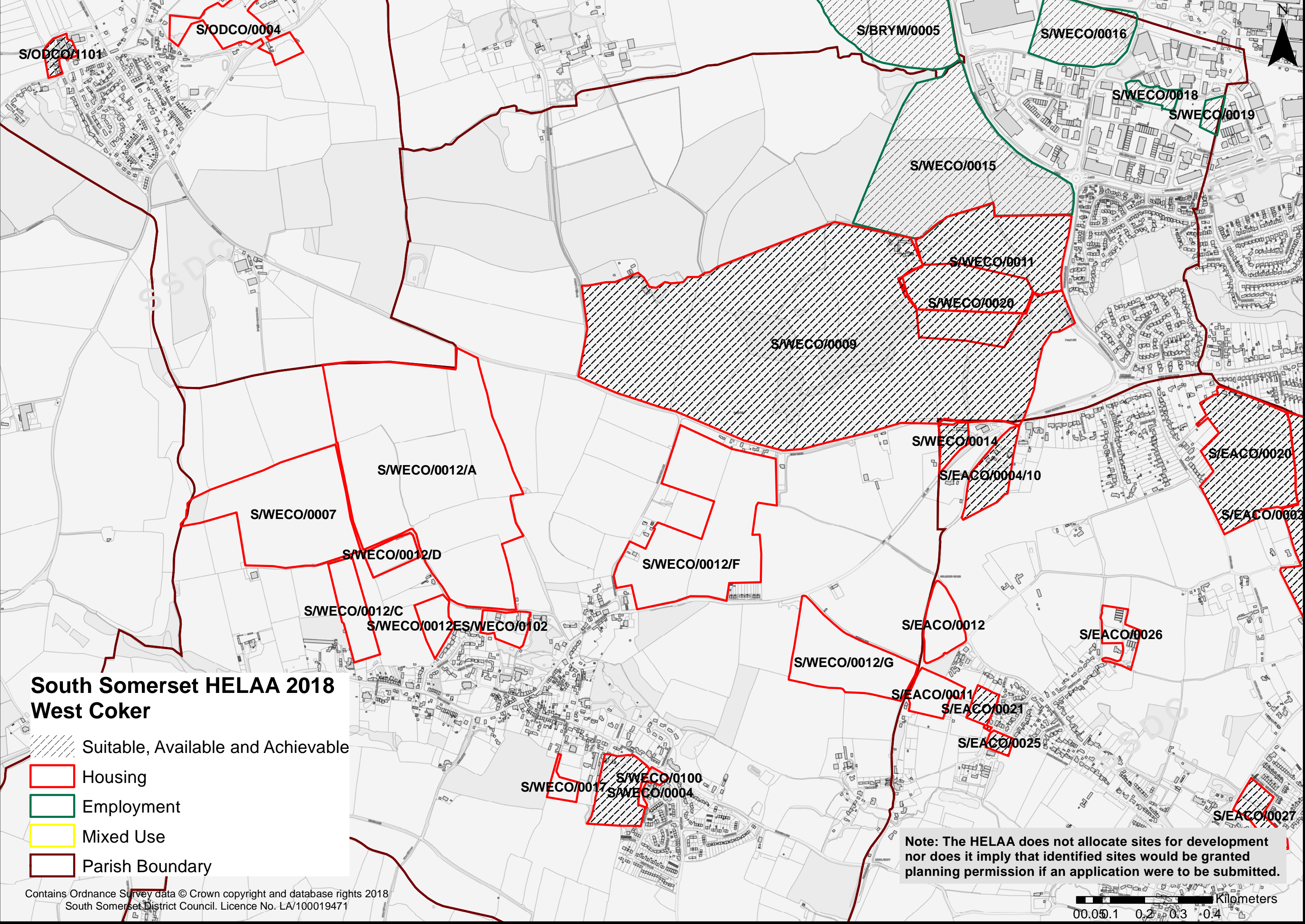
South Somerset HELAA 2018 Brympton

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

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Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development
nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted
planning permission if an application were to be submitted.





S/ODCO/0101

S/ODCO/0004

S/BRYM/0005

S/WECO/0016

S/WECO/0018

S/WECO/0019

S/WECO/0015

S/WECO/0011

S/WECO/0020

S/WECO/0009

S/WECO/0012/A

S/WECO/0007

S/WECO/0012/D

S/WECO/0012/C

S/WECO/0012/E S/WECO/0102

S/WECO/0012/F

S/WECO/0014

S/EACO/0004/10

S/EACO/0020

S/EACO/0003

S/EACO/0026

S/EACO/0012

S/EACO/0011

S/EACO/0021

S/EACO/0025

S/WECO/0012/G






S/WECO/0017

S/WECO/0100

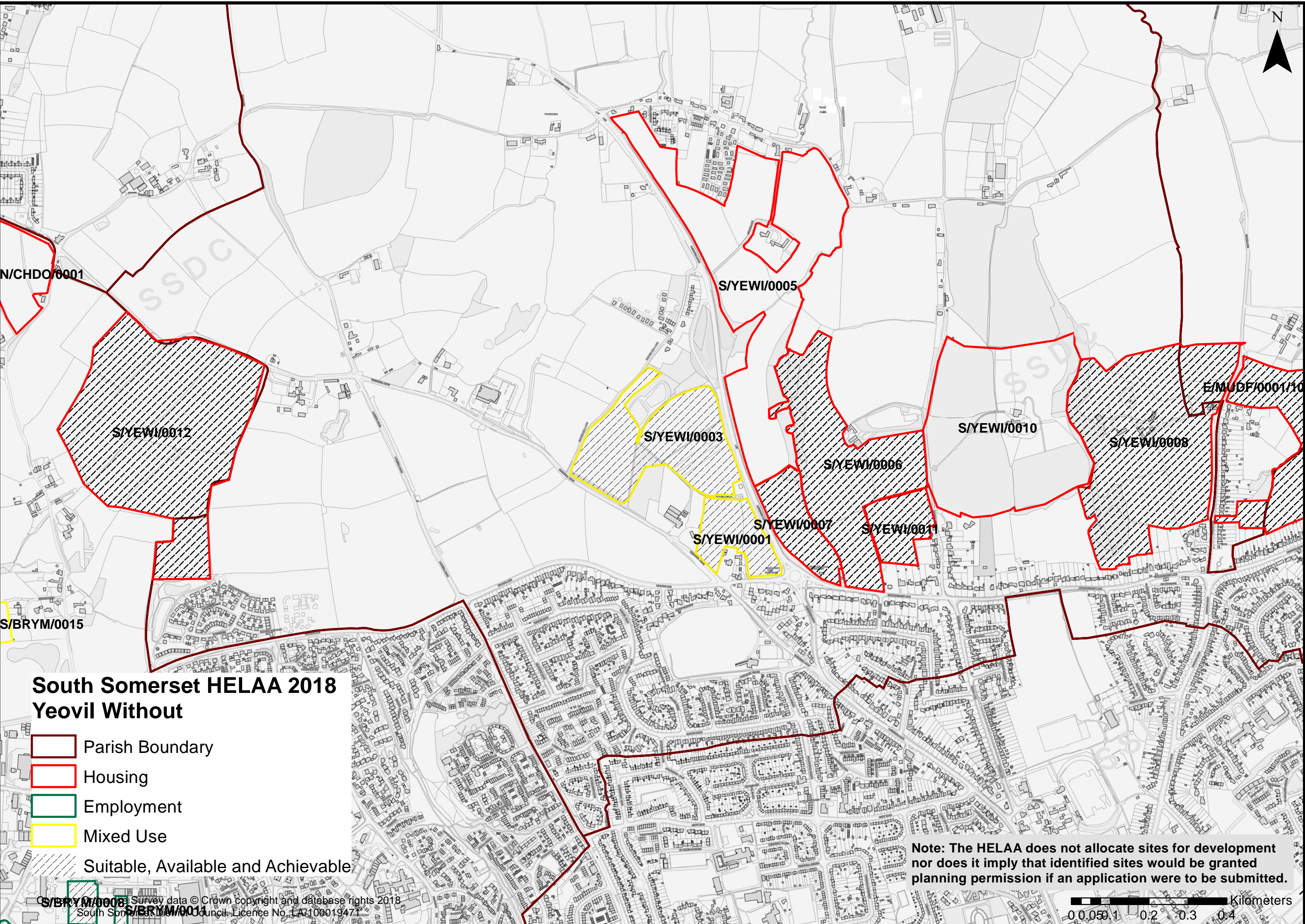
S/WECO/0004

S/EACO/0027

South Somerset HELAA 2018 West Coker

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted planning permission if an application were to be submitted.



South Somerset HELAA 2018 Yeovil Without

- Parish Boundary
- Housing
- Employment
- Mixed Use
- Suitable, Available and Achievable

Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted planning permission if an application were to be submitted.

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Yeovil as at 31st March 2018 is 2,204 dwellings. The currently adopted Local Plan proposes two new Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) at Keyford in the south and Upper Mudford to the north east of the settlement that will deliver a combined 1,565 dwellings and 5 ha of employment land. At the time of writing, planning applications for each of the SUEs have been submitted but remain to be determined.¹⁰²

The Town Centre Development Strategy for Yeovil has been undertaken by consultants on behalf of South Somerset District Council and the refresh of Yeovil Town Centre is one of the Council's Priority Projects for 2019 to 2020.

It is noted that the East Coker Neighbourhood Plan has now been made, having been agreed by an independent Examiner and the subject of a favourable referendum. The neighbourhood area includes the whole of the parish of East Coker which extends into the southern edge of Yeovil, where the Yeovil South Area SUE is located. The Neighbourhood Plan provides for at least 54 additional dwellings within the Parish over the period 2011-2028 this figure excludes to Yeovil South Area SUE. Policy SS2 of this Local Plan Review sets a requirement for 38 new dwellings in the Neighbourhood Area excluding the South Area Sustainable Urban Extension and the site allocated under Policy YV3 of the Local Plan Review.

The HELAA shows that there are few opportunities for the redevelopment of brownfield land outside the Town Centre. Any additional growth directed at Yeovil during the LPR period will need to be located on the fringes of the settlement and there are a number of potential choices given the HELAA findings.

There could be any number of different permutations of growth options for Yeovil, made up of packages of different HELAA sites and exploring different scales of development. However, it is important that any growth options are suitably distinct in order to allow a meaningful appraisal to be carried out. Based on the findings of the HELAA work a number of growth options for Yeovil can be identified. These are as follows:

1. Further growth to the North and North East, comprised of the following housing/ mixed use sites:
 - E/MUDF/0009 (A178);
 - E/MUDF/0004 (A50);
 - S/YEWI/0500 (A61);
 - S/YEWI/0004 (A126);
 - E/MUDF/0001/10 (A49); and
 - S/YEWI/0008 (A63).
2. Further growth to the North and North West, comprised of the following housing/ mixed use sites:
 - S/YEWI/0011 (A174);

¹⁰² Primrose Lane, Upper Mudford – 14/02554/OUT; and Keyford – 15/01000/OUT

- S/YEWI/0006 (A62);
 - S/YEWI/0007 (A137);
 - S/YEWI/0001 (A19);
 - S/YEWI/0003 (A20); and
 - S/YEWI/0012 (A180).
3. Further growth to the South West, comprised of the following housing/ mixed use sites:
- S/WECO/0011 (A127); and
 - S/WECO/0009 (A169).
4. Further growth to the South, comprised of the following housing/ mixed use sites:
- S/EACO/0020 (A32);
 - S/EACO/0003 (A37); and
 - S/EACO/0022 (A39).
5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil, comprised of any of the housing/ mixed use sites identified above including:
- Land at Babylon Hill in West Dorset.

There are a number of environmental constraints, in particular landscape/ historic environment sensitivities and areas of high flood risk, surrounding Yeovil that are likely to reduce the capacity of these HELAA sites to accommodate growth. Given uncertainties around the potential scale of growth, it is considered appropriate to assume that each of the options identified above could deliver a similar quantum of growth (housing and employment) and associated community infrastructure improvements during LPR period. The potential for more or less growth at Yeovil during the LPR period will be explored further through district-wide spatial strategy alternatives.

Appraisal of options

SA Theme: Communities					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	=	=	=	=	=
Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
Discussion	<p>All options perform equally in terms of providing sufficient housing to meet the identified housing needs of the community, as it is assumed that all options could deliver the same quantum of growth. Long term significant positive effects are predicted in this respect.</p> <p>This residential growth seen in Yeovil in recent years has primarily spread north and west of the town centre, absorbing the small hamlets of Preston Plucknett and Alvington, and now extending to the edge of Lufton hamlet to the west and Brimsmore to the north. As such it is considered that further growth to the north and west would lead to positive effects in terms of promoting the growth of existing communities and enhancing settlement identity. The potential for positive effects in this respect are anticipated for all options, as all options seek to extend the fringes of Yeovil, where a range of small settlements exist and would likely benefit from improved access to facilities, services, and potential improvements to highways/ public transport infrastructure. However, it is considered that all options also have the potential to adversely impact existing communities through the effects of coalescence. The delivery of housing, employment and associated infrastructure along the fringes of Yeovil may alter existing settlement patterns, leading to loss of settlement identity.</p> <p>It is also recognised that all options are of similar distance from Yeovil town centre and have the potential to deliver a similar level of infrastructure to support growth. As such, it is considered that the options cannot be differentiated between in terms of the Communities SA theme.</p>				

SA Theme: Economy and Employment					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	2	2	2	2	1
Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>Yeovil plays a significant economic role in the County and is the prime economic driver for South Somerset. It has high levels of self-containment and also high levels of in-commuting. All options are considered to lead to positive effects in terms of promoting access to employment, as all have reasonable access to Yeovil town centre. Further growth to the east however is expected to lead to positive effects of greater significance than further growth to the north west, given it is located closer to the town centre; via the A37 and A357 which run through the settlement. While it is recognised that the car is the primary mode of travel throughout Yeovil, access to sustainable transport (namely bus routes) throughout Yeovil for all options is reasonable. For residents commuting out of Yeovil, there are two mainline railway stations, Yeovil Pen Mill on the Weymouth-Bristol line and Yeovil Junction on the Exeter-London Waterloo line. Of Options 1 - 4, Option 1 (further growth to the north and north east) is located closest to Pen Mill railway station on the eastern edge of the settlement, while Option 4 (further growth to the south) is located closest to Yeovil Junction, to the south. It is considered that Option 5 would likely be the best performing of the options, as growth could be directed to areas with better access to existing employment areas, including the town centre. It is also recognised that there is a regular bus service from the railway stations to the town centre, and that Pen Mill railway station has good pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre via an off road path. Options identified as being in close proximity to the railway stations therefore perform positively in terms of providing sustainable access to employment both within and outside of Yeovil.</p> <p>Looking specifically at existing key employment sites in Yeovil, it is considered that the Lufton 2000 Business Park provides a considerable level of employment land and is strategically significant to the town's economy. The Business Park is located to the west of the settlement, and therefore Option 2 (Further growth to the North and North West) and Option 3 (Further growth to the South West) perform positively in terms of providing good access to the Business Park, supporting levels of self-containment in Yeovil. As discussed above, it is considered that Option 5 (Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil) may also perform positively in this respect through directing growth to sustainable locations; this however is uncertain at this stage.</p> <p>All options have the potential to include employment land and infrastructure delivery to support the town, encouraging inward investment and supporting local economic growth. It is considered that all options would be able to deliver a similar level of infrastructure, and therefore options cannot be differentiated between in this respect. Nonetheless, it is considered that the delivery of infrastructure alongside development has the potential to lead to positive effects against this SA theme, although this is uncertain at this stage.</p>				

SA Theme: Health and Equalities					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	2	3	2	3	1
Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>All options have reasonable access to Yeovil town centre, which includes a range of services and community facilities, such as Yeovil District Hospital, Yeovil College, the Octagon Theatre, Yeovil Town Football Club, and Westland Leisure Complex. Looking specifically at health services, while all options have similar access to Yeovil District Hospital in the town centre, GP surgeries are dispersed throughout the settlement. Option 1 (Further growth to the North and North East) is within 800m of Yeovil Health Centre, and Growth Option 2 (Further growth to the North and North West) is within 800m of Ryalls Park Medical Centre (exception to this is S/YEWI/0012) which is 900m from the GP surgery. Option 3 and Option 4 are located significantly further from a GP surgery (2.1km and 2km respectively). It is therefore considered that Option 3 (Further growth to the South West) and Option 4 (Further growth to the South) perform less positively in terms of promoting accessibility to a range of community facilities and services for all groups. Option 1 and Option 2 will likely lead to positive effects of greater significance in this respect; however, it is considered that Option 5 (Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil) would be best performing as growth could be directed on the fringes of Yeovil that has the best access to existing health facilities. Development of all Options may support improvements to existing or delivery of new community infrastructure, contributing towards the positive expansion of the town. As set out above, the level of infrastructure delivery is assumed to be equal under all options at this stage, and therefore a better performing option cannot be identified in this respect.</p> <p>It is predicted that growth around the town will have a positive effect on new and existing residents' quality of life and improve day-to-day neighbourhood satisfaction, creating more positively integrated communities. All Options have the potential for a positive effect against housing as all will help to meet local need as identified through the SHMA (2016).¹⁰³ However, as is the case for infrastructure delivery, the level of housing is expected to be equal under all growth options, and therefore none of the options are better performing in this respect.</p>				

¹⁰³ JG Consulting (2016) Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

SA Theme: Transport and Movement					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	2	3	3	2	1
Significant effect?	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Discussion	<p>In terms of the strategic transport network, Yeovil is closely linked to the A303 trunk road, which runs east-west through the district, and the A30 and A37 also run through the town. While levels of self-containment are very high in Yeovil, there remains a reliance on the car as the primary mode of transport, and therefore traffic throughout the town is a significant issue. All options are well located in terms of access to the strategic transport network, and it is considered that development under all options is likely to result in increased vehicular use in the town with the potential for long term adverse effects.</p> <p>Of the options, only Option 1 (further growth to the north and north east) and Option 4 (further growth to the south) are well located in terms of access to Yeovil's two railway stations; Penn Mill and Yeovil Junction, respectively. There are a number of bus and routes available in Yeovil, with hourly services connecting the town with surrounding settlements such as Langport, Somerton, Ilchester, Strete and Glastonbury. In terms of accessibility, Option 1 and Option 2 to the north have good access to a bus stop, being within 800m of bus stops on Mudford Road, Combe Street Lane, along the A37, and on Tintinhull Road. Option 3 and Option 4 to the south/south west are similarly well located in terms of bus stops, with numerous bus stops located on West Coker Road and along Bridle Way. There is also a regular bus service from the two railway stations to the town centre, and specifically, Pen Mill railway station has good pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre via an off road path. All options therefore perform positively in terms of promoting the uptake of sustainable travel. It is noted however that Option 1 and Option 4 may deliver positive effects of greater significance given their location in close proximity to the railway stations, and subsequently the increased opportunity to encourage modal shift for shorter journeys both within the town, and for wider commuter journeys. It is also considered that Option 5 would likely direct growth to sustainable locations, which would likely include good access to railway, bus, cycle, and pedestrian links; leading to significant long term positive effects through promoting and encouraging the use of sustainable transport.</p> <p>All options are assumed to have the potential to include enhancements/ improvements to services/ facilities and public transport. As set out above, the level of infrastructure delivery is expected to be equal under all options, and therefore none of the options are better performing in this respect.</p>				

SA Theme: Energy and Climate Change					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	=	=	=	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>In relation to climate change, key issues include the need to capitalise upon opportunities to design-in low carbon infrastructure to development from the outset, and therefore minimise additional CO₂ emissions associated with development. There are no significant differences between the options in terms of opportunities to design-in low carbon infrastructure, i.e. given there is no difference in quantum of housing growth between options.</p> <p>All options present an opportunity to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change through providing improvements to the local green infrastructure network. It is considered that all options are able to deliver a similar level of infrastructure, and as such all options perform equally in this respect.</p>				

SA Theme: Water Resources, Quality and Flooding					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	2	1	1	3	1
Significant effect?	No	No	No	Uncertain	No
Discussion	<p>Yeovil is constrained by flood risk; notably due the presence of the River Yeo, Coker Stream and Welhams Brook, plus associated headwater streams. In terms of the options, Option 2 (Further growth to the North and North West) and Growth Option 3 (Further growth to the South West) are located wholly within Flood Zone 1 which is at low risk of flooding. E/MUDF/0009 within Growth Option 1 (Further growth to the North and North East) contains a small area of land within Flood Zone 3 along the south eastern boundary, while Option 4 (Further growth to the South) is the most constrained of the options, as a significant proportion of S/EACO/0022 is located within Flood Zone 2 and 3, to the southeast of the site. In terms of Option 5 (Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil), Land at Babylon Hill in West Dorset is located in Flood Zone 1. It is currently uncertain where the remainder of development would be delivered under this Option; however, it is considered that areas at high risk of flooding would be avoided in line with the sequential test.</p> <p>In terms of surface water flood risk areas they coincide with the areas of fluvial flood risk identified at E/MUDF/0009 and S/EACO/0022. Taking this into account, Option 4 (Further growth to the South) performs least well against this theme, as it includes the greatest proportion of land at risk of flooding. Option 2 (Further growth to the North and North West) and Option 3 (Further growth to the South West) are best performing as they do not include areas at risk of flooding.</p> <p>It is however considered that development under Option 1, and to a lesser extent Option 4, could avoid the highest flood risk areas and deliver suitable mitigation (including sustainable drainage systems) to ensure that development does not increase flood risk elsewhere.</p> <p>All Options are considered to perform equally in terms of demand for water, and impact on water quality.</p>				

SA Theme: Soil and Land					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	2	2	2	3	1
Significant effect?	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>Much of the town is surrounded by Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land (Grade 1, Grade 2 and 3a). Growth Options 1 to 4 include areas of BMV land, and as such, would result in some loss of this resource, having a negative effect on the land and soil SA theme.</p> <p>In terms of the significance of effects, Option 4 (Further Growth to the South) is almost entirely located on Grade 1 land, and therefore development of this Option will result in a significant loss of this resource with the potential for permanent significant negative effects. Growth Option 4 is therefore worst performing of the options.</p> <p>It is difficult to differentiate between Options 1-3, as all include a mix of Grade 1 – 3 agricultural land, covering a similar extent of each Option. Additionally, given quantum of growth is considered to be similar under each Option, the land take under each Option is also assumed to be similar. It is therefore concluded that development under any of these options will result in the loss of high quality agricultural land at a significant scale; with likely significant permanent negative effects on soil resources.</p> <p>In terms of Option 5 (Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil), it is noted that Land at Babylon Hill in West Dorset is not located within an area of BMV land. While the location of further dispersed growth within this option is currently unknown, it is considered that given the high level of BMV land surrounding the town, development within the fringes may lead to some loss of high quality land. However, this is uncertain at this stage. Development under Option 5 could be directed to those areas of agricultural land that is lower quality and is therefore likely to perform better against this theme compared to the other options. However, this is uncertain and dependant on the sites that are included.</p>				

SA Theme: Biodiversity and Geodiversity					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	2	3	4	2	1
Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	No	Uncertain
Discussion	<p>None of the Options are located within, or are within close proximity to internationally or nationally designated biodiversity sites. In terms of locally designated sites, S/WECO/0009 within Option 3 (Further Growth to the South West) contains two LWSs; Dry Copse and The Rookery. Both LWSs are located centrally within the site, and consist predominately of ancient/semi-natural woodland and plantation, with some scrub and bracken present. There is the potential for development across the whole site to have significant negative effects on biodiversity through direct loss of these important habitats, in addition to potential for minor negative effects as a result of increased disturbance, noise, light and air pollution. This should be considered alongside the potential to possibly retain and enhance these habitats and deliver significant positive effects. For example, development proposals could include the delivery of biodiversity net gain, creating ecological corridors and connecting the two woodland habitats within the site.</p> <p>E/MUDF/0009 within Growth Option 2 (Further growth to the North and North West) partially contains Green Acres Farm LWS which is located along the northern border of the site. Green Acres Farm LWS consists of three semi-improved meadows. It is considered that development will need to retain the area of this habitat where it appears on site to avoid negative effects arising in relation to habitat loss. Overall, it is considered likely that development has the potential to lead to minor negative effects on the meadow habitats and the species they support as a result of increased disturbance, noise, light and air pollution; with the potential for minor long term negative effects. As above, it is considered that there is also the potential to deliver positive effects through biodiversity enhancement/ net gain.</p> <p>Options 1 and 4 do not include any LWSs and therefore are not anticipated to directly impact upon locally designated sites. However, in terms of potential indirect effects, it is noted that SEACO/0022 within Option 4 (Further Growth to the South) is located adjacent to Coker Moor Stream LWS, within 300m of Barwick Park LWS (old parkland site now consisting of arable and cattle grazed fields), and within 800m of Tucking Mill Woods (unimproved calcareous grassland, semi-improved grassland, lakes, stream, and secondary woodland). Additionally, S/EACO/0020 and S/EACO/0003 are within approximately 230m of Yew Tree Close LWS (ancient woodland site). Within Option 1(Further Growth to the North and North East) S/YEWI/0012 is within approximately 300m and 400m of The Wilderness LWS and Vagg Copse LWS, respectively. Both LWSs consist of ancient semi-natural broadleaved woodland. It is considered that there is the potential for development of Options 1 and 3 to lead to minor long term negative effects as a result of increased disturbance, noise, light and air pollution. Suitable mitigation should be considered through development proposals.</p> <p>It is predicted that there may be some additional residual negative effects on biodiversity as a result of development, through loss of greenfield land, and any adverse effects on BAP priority habitats. Notably, (outside of the LWSs) there are areas of deciduous woodland within S/YEWI/0006 and S/YEWI/007 within Option 2 (Further Growth to the North and North West); and within S/WECO/0009 with Option 3 (Further Growth to the South West). However, as discussed above, it is also possible that options may include the delivery of biodiversity net gain, leading to positive effects through the creation of new habitats and improved connectivity throughout the area. Given housing and infrastructure delivery under all Options is considered to be equal, all Options perform similarly in this respect.</p> <p>Overall, given the presence of two locally designated sites within S/WECO/0009, Option 3 is considered most likely to have the potential for negative effects of greatest significance. The appraisal also identifies potential under Option 2 to result in habitat loss, leading to long term negative effects. However, it is noted that there is the potential for Options to deliver positive effects through biodiversity enhancement/ net gain. Option 1 and Option 4 largely avoid designated biodiversity assets, and are both considered less likely to result in significant negative effects for biodiversity compared to the other options. However, there also remains the potential for indirect effects on locally designated sites.</p>				

	<p>In terms of Option 5, (Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil), it is noted that Land at Babylon Hill in West Dorset is not located within or within close proximity to a designated biodiversity site. While the location of further dispersed growth within this option is currently unknown, it is considered that growth will seek to avoid designated sites and important habitats where possible. However, this is uncertain at this stage as the precise sites are not known.</p>
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SA Theme: Landscape and Townscape					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	4	4	3	2	1
Significant effect?	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Uncertain	Uncertain
Discussion	<p>The immediate landscape setting of the town is the headwater valley associated with the Dodham brook – a tributary of the Yeo – and the immediate downstream length of the Yeo below their confluence. The hills defining this valley ‘cradle’ the town, defined to the south by the escarpments of Babylon and Summerhouse Hills, which extend west along West Coker and Camp roads toward Odcombe, whilst a parallel escarpment to the north defines the town’s northward extent and valley setting. To the east, the River Yeo marks the extent of the town whilst the Dorset Hills extending north of Babylon Hill contain its setting. To the west, the town lays within the higher ground of the Yeo (Dodham brook) watershed, other than by Lufton where recent employment growth has extended the town northwest beyond the Yeo’s catchment area, toward Montacute¹⁰⁴.</p> <p>Looking specifically at the options, Option 1 (Further growth to the North and North East) is located within areas with low, moderate-low, and moderate capacity to accommodate built development.¹⁰⁵ Notably, the entirety of S/YEWI/0050 is located within an area with low capacity. Similarly, Option 2 (Further growth to the North and North West) is located within areas with low and moderate-low capacity to accommodate built development.¹⁰⁶ Notably, the entirety of S/YEWI/0012 is located within an area with low capacity. Further growth to the north/north-east and north/north-west therefore has the potential to adversely impact upon the valued northern escarpment and foothills; the escarpment being an important land mark identifying the location of Yeovil.¹⁰⁷ This has the potential to lead to long term significant negative effects on landscape and townscape.</p> <p>Option 3 (Further growth to the South West) is located within a variety of capacity areas; ranging from low to moderate-high. While S/WECO/0011 is located almost entirely within an area of moderate-high capacity to accommodate built development, being located adjacent to the existing built up area, S/WECO/0009 is largely within an area of low capacity to accommodate built development, given it would significantly extend the existing built form into the open countryside to the west of the main settlement.¹⁰⁸ This would likely lead to loss of open land, impacting upon the existing extensive views, with the potential for long term negative effects.¹⁰⁹</p> <p>Option 4 (Further Growth to the South) is best performing of the Options 1 - 4, given it does not contain an area of low development capacity. While S/EACO/0020 is of medium-low capacity, the larger sites S/EACO/003 and S/EACO/0022 are predominately of moderate to high development capacity, avoiding significant negative effects on the landscape and townscape character of the area.</p> <p>It is considered for all options that mitigation which reduces the extent of development (to avoid the most sensitive areas), is considered likely to reduce the significance of the potential negative effects. However, this is uncertain at this stage and will be dependent on the design/ layout and implementation of specific mitigation measures.</p>				

¹⁰⁴ South Somerset District Council (2008) Peripheral Landscape Assessment - Yeovil

¹⁰⁵ Ibid

¹⁰⁶ Ibid

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

	In terms of Option 5, (Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil), it is noted that Land at Babylon Hill in West Dorset is located within an area of moderate to high capacity to accommodate development. While the location of further dispersed growth within this option is currently unknown, it is considered that growth could be directed to areas with high or moderate capacity to accommodate development where possible. However, this is uncertain at this stage.
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SA Theme: Historic Environment					
Options	1. Further growth to the North and North East	2. Further growth to the North and North West	3. Further growth to the South West	4. Further growth to the South	5. Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil
Rank	2	4	3	3	1
Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Uncertain
Discussion	<p>The sensitivity of the historic landscape has been characterised to some extent through the Peripheral Landscape Assessment (2008), and as such, the findings discussed under the 'Landscape and Townscape' SA Theme are also applicable for this SA Theme. In this respect, further growth to the north/north-east and north/north-west perform less well than other options.</p> <p>In terms of designated and non-designated heritage assets within Yeovil, S/YEWI/0012 within Option 2 (Further growth to the North and North West) partially contains Brympton Conservation Area which includes numerous listed buildings. Development of the site is therefore considered likely to significantly impact on the intrinsic qualities, historic character and setting of the Conservation Area, the heritage assets contained within it, and the overall townscape setting of the settlement. This will likely lead to long-term negative effects. However; the overall significance of the effects will ultimately be dependent on details such as design and layout. It is also noted that development has the potential to deliver positive effects; where proposals seek to deliver good, high quality design and appropriate layout, this may lead to landscape/ townscape improvements and positive effects such as increased awareness and access.</p> <p>Option 1 (Further growth to the North and North East), Option 3 (Further growth to the South West) and Option 4 (Further growth to the South) do not contain any heritage assets. In terms of assets in close proximity to sites, S/EACO/0024 and S/EACO/0003 within Option 4 (Further Growth to the South) both adjoin Roman Villa north of Dunnock's Lane Scheduled Monument, to the south west and south east of the sites, respectively. This Scheduled Monument coincides with an Archaeological Site of National Significance. It is therefore considered that there is the potential for significant negative effects on the historic environment as a result of development. However, mitigation measures may reduce the potential for negative effects and present opportunities for positive effects as discussed above - in particular considerations for mitigation should include high quality design and layout, and appropriate archaeological investigations prior to development.</p> <p>S/WECO/0009 within Option 3 is located adjacent to Brympton D'Evercy Historic Park & Garden, which contains many listed buildings. Development of the site has the potential to impact upon the setting of the heritage assets, possibly leading to long term negative effects. Development, however, is also considered to have the potential to improve access to the Registered Park and Garden which may lead to long term positive effects, and has the potential to link biodiversity recommendations for the site with heritage assets and their settings to deliver synergistic long term positive effects.</p> <p>Option 1 is the least constrained of Options 1 - 4, with the only heritage asset in close proximity to the sites within the Option being Grade II listed buildings; notably one is located adjacent to E/MUDF/003, along Mudford Hill. Potential effects on the historic environment through the delivery of this Option are therefore not anticipated to be significant.</p> <p>In terms of Option 5, (Further growth dispersed around the fringes of Yeovil), it is noted that Land at Babylon Hill in West Dorset is not located within or in close proximity to designated heritage assets. While the location of further dispersed growth within this option is currently unknown, it is considered that growth will seek to avoid, where possible, designated and non-designated assets. However, this is uncertain at this stage.</p>				

Primary Market Towns

Chard

Spatial portrait

Chard is located in the west of South Somerset, close to the Devon and Dorset borders and only 12 miles from the English Channel. The town is surrounded by attractive countryside, in particular, the Blackdown Hills AONB to the west and north which provides an important backdrop to the town. Chard is South Somerset's second largest town with a population of 13,684. The town is closely linked to the regional trunk road network; the A303, and the A30 and A358.

Chard has a long history of innovation and manufacturing, particularly engineering. Significantly, over 43% of jobs in the town are within this sector (District average of 20%). Employers include Brecknell Willis (rail transport systems), CME Ltd (manufacturing equipment) and Oscar Mayer (food). The proportion of people living and working in the town is high (64% compared with a District average of 43%), demonstrating a high level of self-containment.

However, the office market is weak, primarily supplying small office suites of converted accommodation occupied by local firms. The proportion of people with the highest qualification levels are also significantly lower than across the County as a whole.

Traffic issues have been a long-standing concern, with certain elements of the town's highway network at or near capacity, particularly the Convent traffic signals and Church Street. In order to accommodate further growth, the creation of an alternative route between the A358 Furnham Road and the A358 Tatworth Road is required.

The town has a good range of visitor attractions in the surrounding area including, but not limited to, Cricket St Thomas Hotel, Ferne Animal Sanctuary, Forde Abbey and Chard Reservoir Nature Reserve.

Chard Junction railway station no longer operates but main line train connections are available at nearby Axminster and Crewkerne.

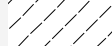




Some of the key environmental issues at Chard include areas of high flood risk to the north east (around Chard Reservoir) and south east, with delineated groundwater protection zones to the south. There is a high quality historic environment within the Conservation Area and European Protected Species are also present.

Site options

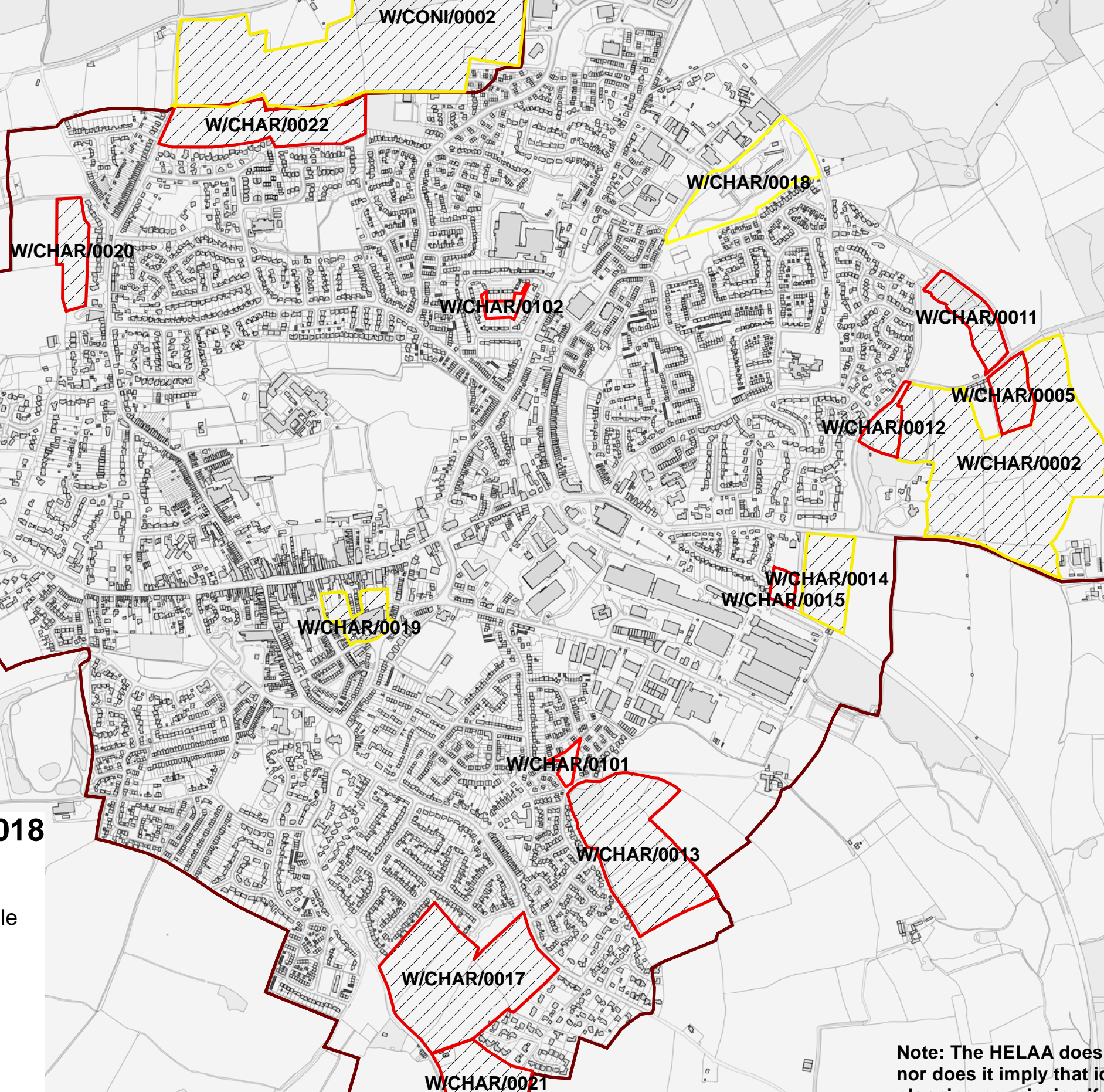
The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.



South Somerset HELAA 2018 Chard

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

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Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development
nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted
planning permission if an application were to be submitted.

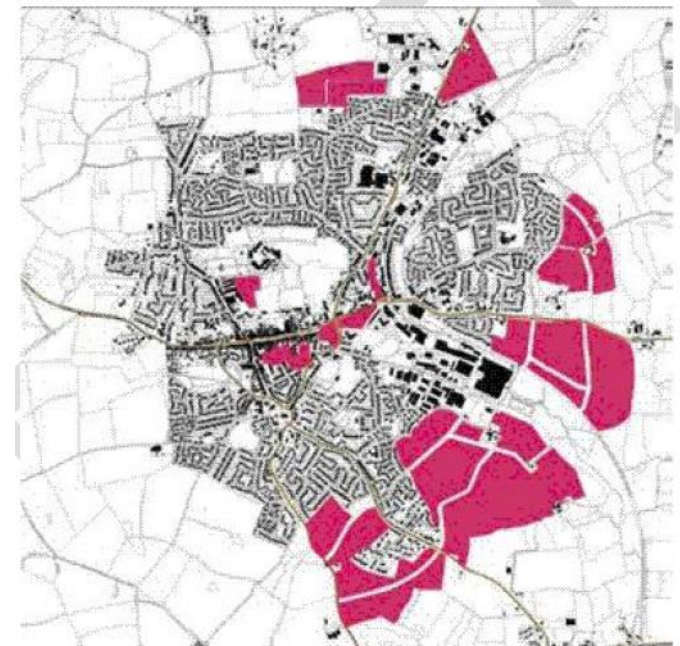
0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Kilometers

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Yeovil as at 31st March 2018 is 505 dwellings. Strategic long-term growth at Chard has been planned for over a decade. It is underpinned by the Chard Regeneration Plan (2010), which forms part of the master planning process to prepare long term plans for the town that address the issues set out in the 'Chard Regeneration Framework'.¹¹⁰ More recently, the 'Chard Refresh' is an ambitious plan to help realise the vision and aims previously agreed by regenerating key sites in the centre of Chard.

The Council is committed to the delivery of the Chard Eastern Development Area (CEDA) as exemplified by the inclusion of key road infrastructure in the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulation 123 list. It is exploring options to enable the delivery of the allocation, and this may include the use of Compulsory Purchase powers.

While development has been slow to come forward within the CEDA, it is clear from the findings of the HELAA that there are no realistic choices in terms of where strategic growth could be alternatively located. In particular when landscape sensitivity is taking into account. The HELAA identifies only two suitable, available and achievable sites (W/CHAR/0020 and W/CHAR/0022) that fall outside the CEDA. These sites have been appraised through the SA process (Appendix III) and can therefore be considered through the Council's site selection process. As a result, it is not considered necessary to undertake any formal appraisal for options at Chard as there are no realistic alternatives in terms of locating strategic long-term growth at this settlement. Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA.



¹¹⁰ An autonomous planning exercise in the form of the Chard Regeneration Framework. The Chard Regeneration Framework is the result of many detailed discussions over a number of years about the challenges that face Chard and the regeneration opportunities that could be available. In January 2007 the District Council agreed the need to lead the development of a Chard Vision project that would allow the challenges to be met and the regeneration opportunities to be taken. Extensive negotiations with the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA), Somerset County Council and Chard Town Council were concluded in October 2008. These established the Chard Regeneration Scheme.

Crewkerne

Spatial portrait

Today, Crewkerne is the third largest settlement in South Somerset, with a population of 7,964 people. It is located in the south west of the District, close to the County boundary with Dorset, 9 miles south west of Yeovil and 7 miles east of Chard. The town acts as a strong functional and service centre for the surrounding area, providing some 3000 jobs, predominantly in manufacturing, including in the high-end technical sector. In retail terms, the centre is vibrant with fewer vacant shops than nationally and includes a variety of national retailers. There are a variety of community services and facilities, including, for example, a library, doctor's surgery, banks, a range of education facilities and a hospital. The main employment area is the Blacknell Industrial Estate which is east of the town centre, concentrated to the north side of the A356 road to Dorchester.

In addition to regular bus services, residents in Crewkerne have access to rail services. The railway station, located in the parish of Misterton, 1.8km (just over a mile) from Crewkerne town centre, is served by South Western Railway on the main line to Yeovil, London and Exeter; parking is currently limited. A national cycle route passes through the town. The level of self-containment is satisfactory compared to the District as a whole with 41% of local residents working locally (District average 43%).






Key environmental issues include Crewkerne's attractive historic environment; the majority of the town centre is covered by Conservation Area status and includes over 140 listed buildings, yet there is often heavy traffic including HGVs passing through on the A30 and A356. The town has a rich natural environment and numerous designated wildlife sites in close proximity to the centre, including Bincombe Hill Local Nature Reserve on the northern outskirts of the town, and the Millwater Site of Special Scientific Interest by Westover Lane. There are also protected species in the town. There are delineated groundwater source protection zones in Crewkerne and potential flood risk from the River Parrett and its tributaries, particularly in the Goulds Brook vicinity. Large areas of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land surround the town.

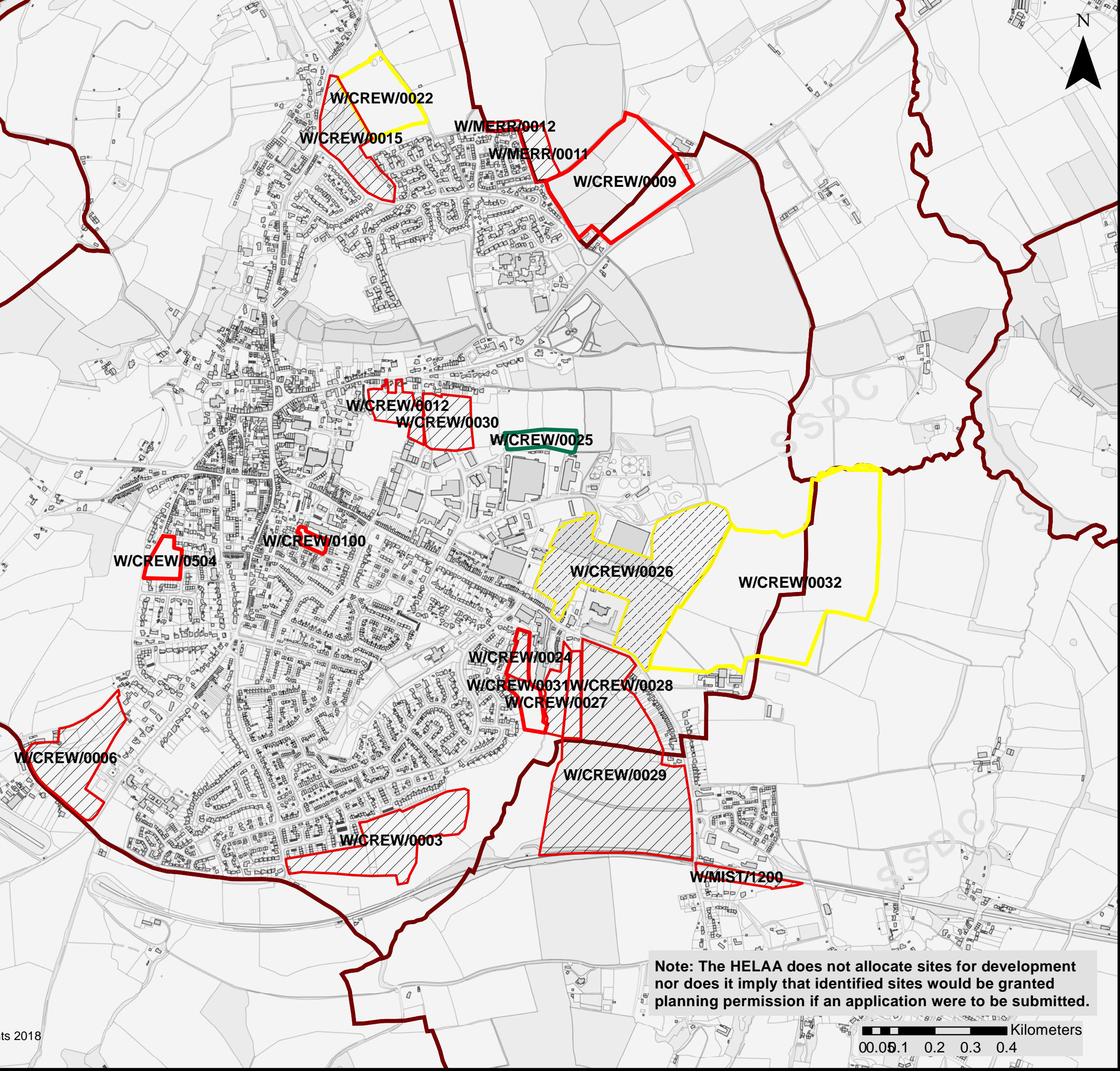
Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.

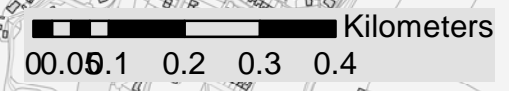


South Somerset HELAA 2018 Crewkerne & part Merriott

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary



Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted planning permission if an application were to be submitted.



Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Crewkerne as at 31st March 2018 is 714 dwellings. The HELAA identified a number of suitable, available and achievable sites at Crewkerne. The majority of these are situated on the edge of the settlement with a concentration of sites in the south east.

Strategic growth to the east of the settlement has been established through previous Local Plans, including the currently adopted Local Plan. Development of Crewkerne Key Site (Saved local plan Allocation KS/CREW/1) is part of the comprehensive regeneration of the town and the site will provide a wide package of land uses. This site has convenient links to the town centre and will provide a link between the A30 (Yeovil Road) and A356 (Station Road). This site is also saved as a strategic employment site.

There is an outline planning permission for 525 dwellings on the northern part of the site which expires in February 2023, with reserved matters approval for 203 units. Additionally, there is outline approval for 110 homes and a 60 bed care home to the south, which reduces the amount of employment land to be developed. So far, work has not commenced. Site W/CREW/0026 is considered to form part of the Crewkerne Key Site.

In terms of local aspirations, the Community Plan for Crewkerne and District (2006), entitled 'A Better Crewkerne and District' (ABCD), recognised the economic benefits of developing the saved Local Plan Key Site (known locally as the CLR site). The Plan also highlighted that the movement of traffic through Crewkerne is of major concern to the community and the ABCD group was working in partnership with Somerset County Council to implement traffic management proposals. The ABCD Group remain very active and are continually working to aid the regeneration and sustainability of the town as a whole. Other community aspirations included a greater range of shops, increased parking, and the enhancement of the town centre, which would also improve the visitor experience.

All of the sites considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process with the findings presented in Appendix III. Given the findings of the HELAA there appears to be little choice in terms potential directions of growth for strategic development at the settlement over and above what is already being delivered at the Crewkerne Key Site. Any number or combinations of the identified suitable, achievable or available sites could be brought forward through the Council's site selection process in addition to the Crewkerne Key Site in order to provide additional growth/ flexibility. It is therefore not considered necessary to undertake a formal appraisal of options for Crewkerne. Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA.

Iminster

Spatial portrait

Iminster is situated in the west of the District and benefits from its strategic location where the A303 meets the A358. Taunton is 12 miles north-west and Yeovil 15 miles east. It is the fifth largest settlement in South Somerset with a population of 6,219 people. This population has grown considerably in recent years; indeed, the amount of people living in the town has increased by almost 40% since 2001.

Highways England plans to dual the link between the M5 at Taunton and the A303/A358 to the Southfields roundabout at Iminster. This will significantly enhance road connectivity to the motorway network for Iminster and is likely to bring about opportunities for growth.

The town is primarily a linear settlement along the through route running east to west (Station Road to Bay Hill). The core of the town is concentrated upon the Market Place and church, which lie between the Shudrick stream and lower slopes of Beacon Hill.

A large employment area exists to the west of the town, and due to its proximity to the A303/A358, additional employment growth has been proposed here in the South Somerset Local Plan since 1991 in recognition of its strategic importance and potential to generate jobs.

The town acts as a strong functional and service centre for the surrounding area, providing some 2,250 jobs, including in the technical engineering and manufacturing sector. In retail terms, the centre is healthy and includes a range of national retailers, including a large supermarket, but also a number of independent shops and restaurants. There are a range of community services and facilities, including a library, banks and primary education (a first and middle school).

The immediate landscape setting of the town is defined by three hills, Beacon Hill to the north, Herne Hill to the southwest, and Pretwood Hill to the southeast. These hills broadly contain the spread of the town and its immediate rural edge. To the west, the setting is less defined, with the town extending toward the open land of the River Isle valley, and an edge that is reinforced by the A303 corridor.

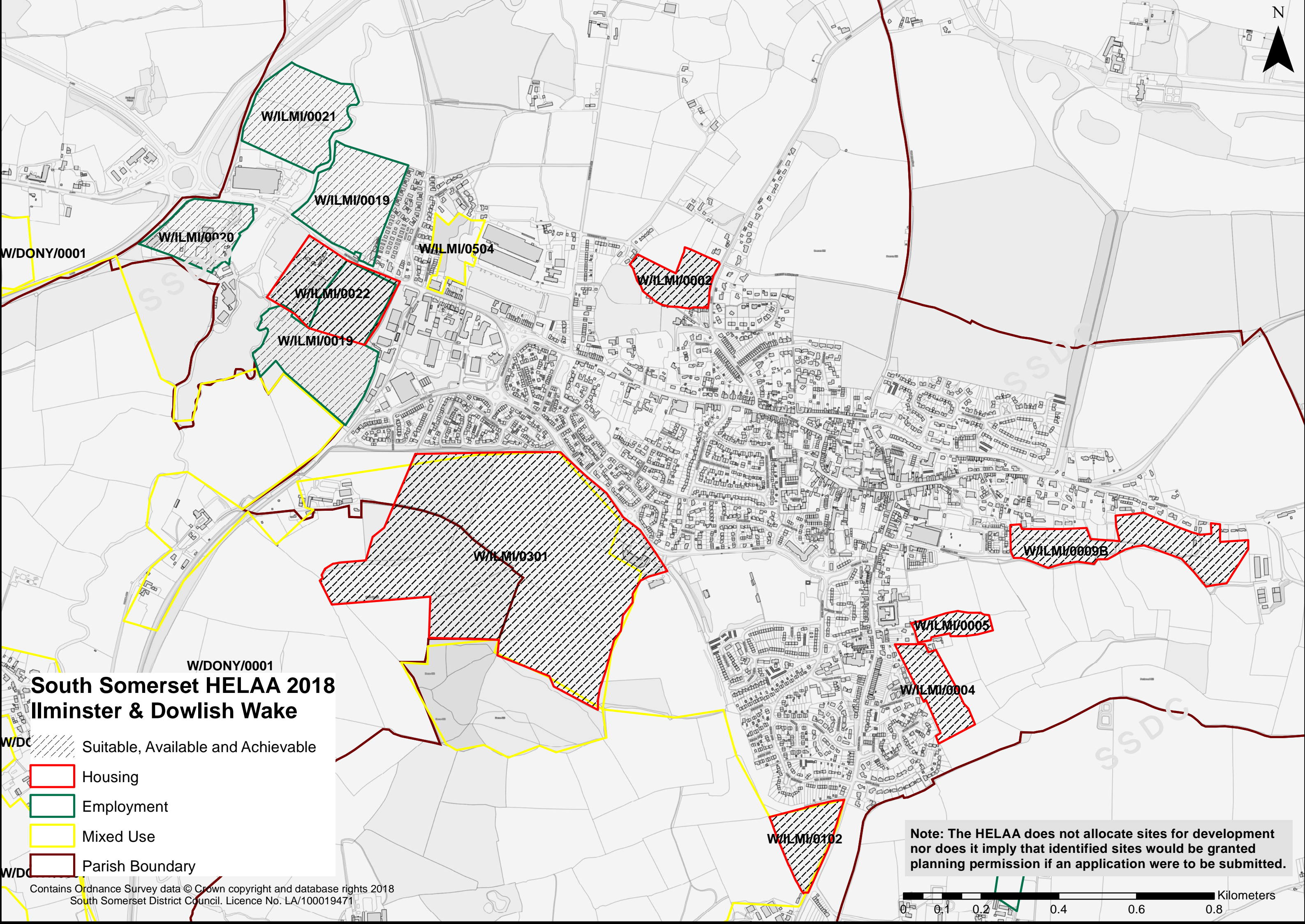
There is a regular, albeit limited bus service in Iminster to Taunton, Yeovil, Chard and Crewkerne. The South Somerset Cycle Route passes through the town. The level of self-containment is satisfactory with 40% of residents working locally (District average 43%). In order to help retain and build upon this self-containment it will be important that additional housing growth is balanced with employment growth.

Like other settlements in South Somerset, a key environmental issue is the value of Iminster's historic environment - the historic layout and rich building styles which are prominent in the town centre, and dominated by the Minster and its tower, form part of the Conservation Area designated in 1973.

Flooding is also an issue for the town. It is constrained by Flood Zone 3 along the length of the River Isle and to the north and south of the A303.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.



W/DONY/0001

W/ILMI/0020

W/ILMI/0021

W/ILMI/0019

W/ILMI/0504

W/ILMI/0002

W/ILMI/0022

W/ILMI/0019

W/ILMI/0301

W/ILMI/0009B






W/ILMI/0005

W/ILMI/0004

W/ILMI/0102

W/DONY/0001

South Somerset HELAA 2018 Iminster & Dowlish Wake

- W/DC
-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
 -  Housing
 -  Employment
 -  Mixed Use
 -  Parish Boundary
- W/DC

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Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted planning permission if an application were to be submitted.

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Kilometers

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Ilminster as at 31st March 2018 is 119 dwellings. The HELAA identified a number of suitable, available and achievable housing, mixed use and employment sites at the settlement. Given the findings of the HELAA work and constraints there are limited choices in terms of realistic directions for any large-scale growth at Ilminster. The sites identified in the HELAA to the north east are predominantly being promoted and are suitable for employment, as they are situated in an area at high risk of fluvial flooding (Flood Zone 3). There are no sites being promoted to the north of the settlement and there is also little capacity to accommodate development in landscape terms.

Strategic growth has been considered through plan-making and proposed by developers for some time in both the south west (Canal Way) and south east (Shudrick Lane) of Ilminster. Directions of growth for development in these areas was subject to close scrutiny during the examination for the currently adopted Local Plan. The Canal Way site has outline planning permission approved for 400 dwellings subject to a Section 106 agreement (16/05500/OUT).

In terms of local aspirations, the entire Parish area of Ilminster has been designated as a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of the preparation of the Ilminster Neighbourhood Plan. A call for sites is currently being carried out.

Taking the above into account it is considered appropriate to consider two potential options for Ilminster through the SA process. The first being an extension to the direction of growth to the south west of Canal Way to develop the remainder of site W/ILMI/0301. The second option being development to the land east of Shudrick Lane, comprised of sites W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 as well as some of the wider area.

Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA. For the purposes of the appraisal it is therefore assumed that both options could deliver a similar scale of growth (housing and employment), including any associated improvements to community infrastructure.

Appraisal of options

SA Theme: Communities		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
Discussion	<p>Both options perform equally in terms of providing sufficient housing to meet the identified housing needs of the community, as it is assumed that both options could deliver the same quantum of growth.</p> <p>Both options are also considered to perform broadly on a par in terms of delivering housing at locations which will help meet community needs. Although Option 2 is closest to the services and facilities of the town centre, Option 1 is also considered to be walking/cycling distance to the centre and is additionally close to existing employment options at the town's west.</p>	

SA Theme: Economy and Employment		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>Both options have potential to support the vitality of the town centre through the addition of new local users. However, on the basis that Option 2 is closest to the town centre and is less well placed to access higher tier service centres via the strategic road network there could potentially be a greater demand for town centre services from development here. Option 1 is considered to perform marginally less well on the basis that it is further from the town centre and provides easier access to the road network and therefore to other service centres.</p> <p>Conversely, Option 1 performs marginally more strongly in terms of delivering residential development which is well located for accessing existing employment sites as it is only a short walk to the large employment area at the town's western extent. This could help support the vitality of existing B-class employment by ensuring the town remains an attractive and affordable location for workers to live.</p> <p>It is considered that both options perform broadly on a par in terms of their capacity to facilitate working from home and remote working.</p>	

SA Theme: Health and Equalities		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>Option 1 is located immediately west of the Ilminster Medical Centre on Canal Way providing direct access to Ilminster's principal healthcare facility. As noted above, Option 1 will also benefit from direct access to the existing green infrastructure network in the town, offering the opportunity to access services by walking or cycling. The National Cycle Route 3 which runs past Option 1 to the town centre also provides recreation opportunities as it also runs through the attractive open countryside to the town of Chard which may encourage recreational walking and cycling.</p> <p>Option 2 is further from healthcare facilities in absolute terms but remains close and accessible to the Medical Centre, including via a direct bus service between Tesco and the Medical Centre. Option 2 also benefits from its close proximity to the town centre, positioning walking and cycling not just as viable options for accessing key services but possibly even the most convenient options. This close proximity is likely to encourage healthy lifestyles insofar as accessing local services and facilities is concerned.</p>	

	Overall, it is considered that both options are perform broadly on a par in relation to the Health and Equalities SA theme.
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SA Theme: Transport and Movement		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>Both options would likely present opportunities for accessing the local road network either via extensions to existing estate roads or the creation of direct access to higher tier local roads. For Option 1, principal vehicular access could be achieved directly from Canal Way, with potential for secondary access from Hither Acre or Adams Meadow to the north. For Option 2, access would likely be achieved via Shudrick Lane to the site's west with additional access direct onto Townsend to the site's north. It is considered that Option 1 performs marginally better in terms of vehicular access as Canal Way is designed as a relatively high capacity road specifically serving modern development at the south of the town. By contrast, Townsend, the primary south western route into and away from the town, is relatively narrow (i.e. wide enough to support two directions of normal traffic but without any central lane markings) and Shudrick Lane serves as access to the Tesco superstore and only supports vehicular travel to the west and south.</p> <p>Option 1 provide more direct access to the Strategic Road Network (SRN) as both the A303 and A358 are served directly by Canal Way, whilst Option 2 is more distant and would necessitate the use of local roads, including a potential bottleneck at the junction of Ditton Street/Orchard Vale, in order to access Canal Way. This could have the potential to introduce queuing traffic, with associated congestion and air quality issues.</p> <p>In terms of sustainable travel opportunities, Option 1's northern boundary is formed by National Cycle Route 3 offering potential to integrate development with existing walking and cycling infrastructure which provides access direct to the town centre. Option 2 is located closer to the town centre services, particularly the western extent of the site which is less than half a mile's walk from the centre. Several existing bus routes run past Option 1 along Canal Way serving the town centre and onwards connectivity to Taunton. Option 2 is not directly served by bus services though it is located closer to the services and facilities of the town centre and could therefore reduce the need to travel to meet many day to day needs.</p> <p>Overall, it is considered that Option 1 performs marginally more strongly in terms of transport and movement. Although Option 2 is closest to town centre services it is more constrained in terms of site access. Option 1 benefits from established walking and cycling infrastructure providing connectivity with the town centre which will help reduce car dependency for shorter journeys, whilst also offering potential for good access to the local and strategic road network.</p>	

SA Theme: Energy and Climate Change		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>It is not possible to differentiate between the two options in terms of energy consumption or efficiency as both options are assumed to have the same development potential and therefore the same level of opportunities to seek energy efficiency through measures such as design and materials.</p> <p>As noted in relation to the Transport and Movement SA theme, Option 1 will likely provide opportunities for walking and cycling as a means of accessing town centre services thank to the existing National Cycle Route 3 which runs adjacent to the site and serves the town centre. This could help contribute to minimising emissions from short car journeys as some local needs will be able to be met without driving. Similarly, Option 2's close proximity to the town centre and the Tesco superstore is also likely to mean that many local needs can be met at the town centre and accessed without the use of a car. Both options are likely to have a similar degree of car dependency in terms of accessing higher tier service centres in the wider sub-region, such as Taunton and Yeovil.</p> <p>On balance it is considered that both options perform broadly on a par in relation to energy and climate change.</p>	

SA Theme: Water Resources, Quality and Flooding		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	2	1
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>It is not possible to differentiate between the two options in terms of water resources and water quality as the scale of development potential at Ilminster mean neither option is considered likely to result in either positive or negative effects.</p> <p>In terms of flooding, both sites are unaffected by fluvial flood risk and perform on a par in this respect. However, Option 1 performs slightly less strongly than Option 2 in terms of surface water flood risk as there is a relatively extensive area of high risk at the north of the Option, along with a linear area of medium risk for the full extent of the Option's eastern boundary with Canal Way. By contrast, Option 2 appears largely free of surface water flood risk, though a linear area of risk lies immediately adjacent to the south. Whilst surface water flood risk can be mitigated through matters of design and layout and through technical interventions, such as SuDS, it is considered that Option 2 performs marginally better than Option 1 overall.</p>	

SA Theme: Soil and Land		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being the 'best and most versatile' land (BMV) and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality. Detailed agricultural land quality surveys have been undertaken around the full circumference of Ilminster, including at each of the two options. The area containing Option 1 was found to be entirely Grade 3b, whilst the area containing Option 2 was found to be entirely Grade 3a. It follows that development at Option 1 would avoid the loss of any BMV agricultural land, whilst development at Option 2 would necessitate such loss. Both options comprise entirely greenfield sites and consequently it is not possible to differentiate between them in terms of promoting the use of previously developed land.</p> <p>In this context it is possible to say that Option 1 performs better in relation to the SA theme of Soil and Land.</p>	

SA Theme: Biodiversity and Geodiversity		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>Neither option directly intersects or overlaps with a designated biodiversity site of local, national or international significance and in this regard they it is not possible to differentiate between them.</p> <p>However, Option 1 is a short distance north of the Herne Hill Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and a short distance east of the Donyatt Railway Cutting LWS. A public right of way (PRoW) runs through both LWSs, providing a connection to Option 1. Therefore, whilst potential for direct effects on biodiversity from development at Option 1 is limited, there could be potential for secondary effects as a result of increased recreational pressure. However, with regard to the Donyatt Railway Cutting LWS a national cycle route already runs through the declared area giving rise to existing potential disturbances and suggesting that the LWS is not necessarily a pristine and fragile habitat. In this context it may be over simplistic to assume a notable increase in potential harm from development at Option 1. Similarly, whilst a PRoW runs through the Herne Hill LWS it is rural and does not provide connectivity to nearby services suggesting it may be unlikely to be substantially impacted by new users from Option 1.</p> <p>Option 2 is a short distance north of the Pretwood Hill LWS though there is no PRoW access between Option 2 and the LWS which limits the potential for recreational pressure. The steeply sloping face of Pretwood Hill is also likely to limit the potential for disturbances at the LWS.</p> <p>On balance it is considered that the two options perform broadly on a par as there is limited potential for direct effects on any designated biodiversity sites from development at either option.</p>	

SA Theme: Landscape and Townscape		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>The Ilminster Peripheral Landscape Study (2007) found that both Option 1 and Option 2 are predominantly within an area of 'high' landscape capacity, with a smaller portion of each site either in 'moderate to high' capacity or 'moderate' capacity. The study finds that the land identified as both Option 1 and Option 2 has "capacity to be developed without too adverse an impact upon the landscape resource". Option 1 is described as "relatively flat and has few constraints". In relation to Option 2 the study considers "further residential growth to be appropriate at this location".</p> <p>Although some development has come forward in the town since the 2007 study, it is considered that the fundamental findings remain unchanged and that land at both options remains largely suitable for some development in landscape and townscape terms in principle. However, it is considered that there is potential to differentiate between the options at a finer grain of analysis. Although Option 1 is overlooked by high ground at Herne Hill and therefore has some visibility within the landscape it is considered to have limited landscape sensitivity. This is because views into the option from Herne Hill are already of a modern urban environment and this would be unlikely to substantially change if the Option were developed. Similarly, as the site is flat, development would be unlikely to substantially obstruct views out of the settlement towards the distinctive and characterful landmark of Herne Hill.</p> <p>Option 2 is considered to have slightly more sensitivity within the landscape in places. This is on the basis that the land at the far east of the option, which the 2007 study found to have only 'moderate' capacity, contributes to the rural setting and character of the approach to the town along Townsend. Development here could compromise this distinctive character and lead to a notably more urban character. Focusing development to the western areas of Option 2 would likely avoid harm to the approach to the town, though there would likely be potential for the rural backdrop to the south of the town to be impacted. Whilst this could likely be mitigated to an extent through matters of design and layout it is considered to be a potential constraint not present at Option 1.</p>	

SA Theme: Historic Environment		
Options	1. Further growth to the south west of Canal Way (W/ILMI/0301)	2. Growth to the Land East of Shudrick Lane (W/ILMI/0009B, W/ILMI/0005, W/ILMI/0004 and some of the wider area)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>Option 1 is located at the south western extent of Ilminster, away from the historic core of the town. The surrounding built environment is contemporary in character and there are no individual designated heritage assets in close proximity to the option. In this context Option 1 is not considered to make any tangible contribution to the town's historic character.</p> <p>By contrast, Option 2 is adjacent to the Ilminster Conservation Area at the centre of the town and its openness provides a rural backdrop to the south of the Conservation Area, contributing to the broader historic setting and character of the town. Additionally, the setting of Grade II listed buildings at 17 Love Lane and 22 Townsend have potential to be partially affected by development at Option 2, though there is no notable cluster of designated assets in the immediate vicinity of the Option.</p> <p>Option 1 is considered to perform most strongly in relation to the Historic Environment SA theme on the basis that development here would lead to no identifiable harm to individual historic assets or to the overall character and setting of the town's historic core.</p>	

Wincanton

Spatial portrait

Wincanton is situated in the east of the District towards the north of the Blackmore Vale overlooking the Cale valley.

The A303 trunk road now defines the south edge of Wincanton and gives the town good road links to London and the south west of England. Nearby towns include Bruton, Castle Cary, Gillingham and Milborne Port within 10 miles, and Yeovil and Sherborne about 15 miles away. Wincanton's population of 5,941,112 makes it the fourth largest settlement in the District in terms of population. An area around the town centre and extending to the north is designated as a Conservation Area. Residential growth has taken place to the east of the town centre and on the Key Site at New Barns Farm to the south west. The main employment areas of the town are located to the south and south west of the town.

Wincanton is located within a rural setting and alongside nearby Castle Cary and Gillingham (in Dorset) and is important in serving the needs of residents in the rural east of South Somerset. In terms of retail, Wincanton has a range of independent stores as well as a couple of national retailers in the town centre and a couple of out-of-centre supermarkets to the south west. Other key services to be found in the town include a doctor's surgery, a hospital, a leisure centre, a library, banks and primary and secondary schools. Wincanton has historic connections with logistics and distribution, with over 12% of local jobs in this sector (District average 3%); and it continues to feature large elements of the dairy industry and food production. Wincanton PLC was established in the town and is now the largest British logistics firm. The town enjoys some particular tourism assets with its famous racecourse and association with Terry Pratchett's 'Discworld' novels. Growth in lifestyle business has occurred in the last decade, associated with proximity to the south east and good connectivity. Wincanton Racecourse plays a role in the local economy by bringing people to the town.

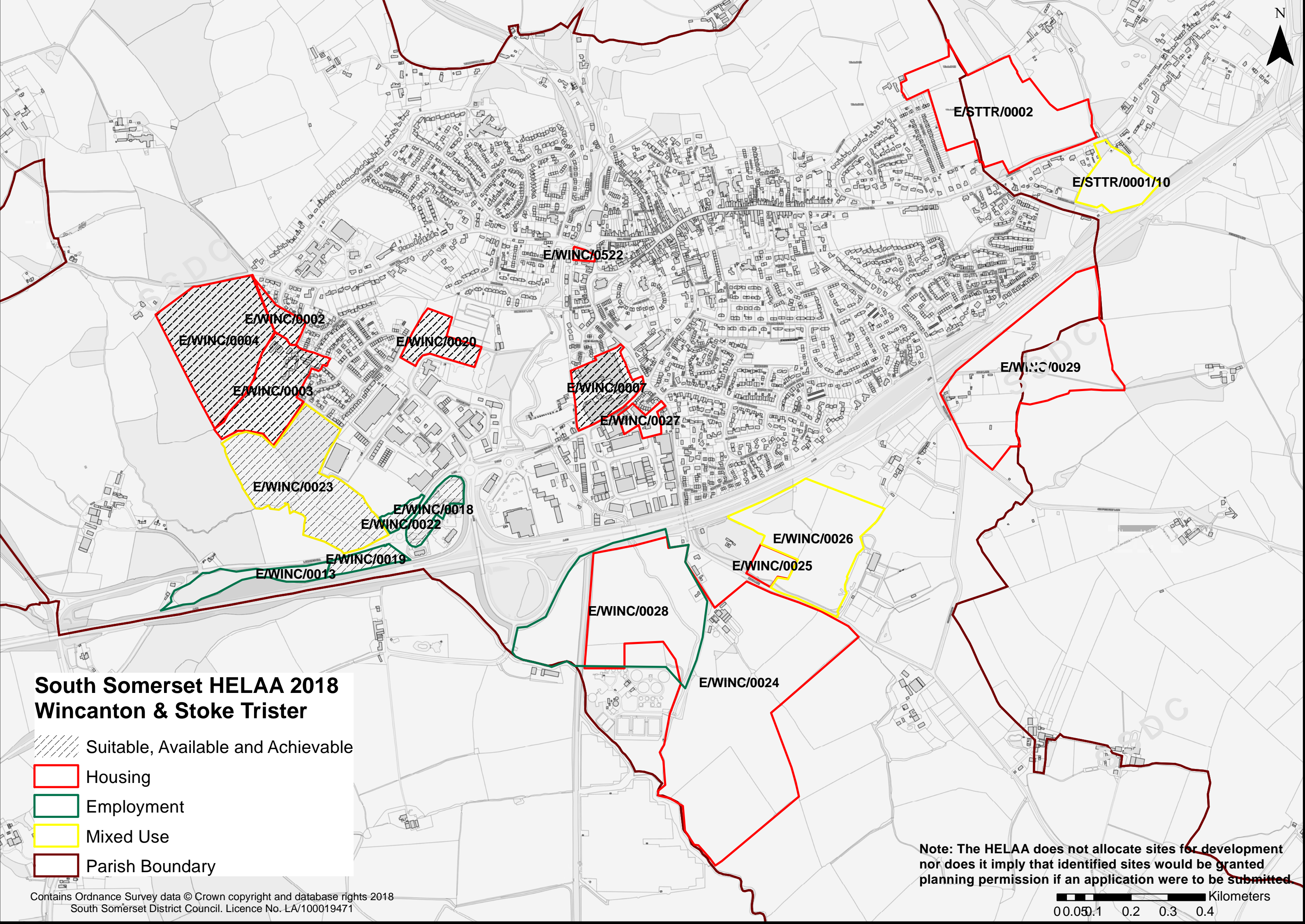
Public transport to the larger settlements of Yeovil, Taunton and Gillingham is relatively good with a regular bus service, although links to other parts of the District are less good. Self-containment is reasonably high with nearly 60% of the population living and working in the town.

Some of the key environmental issues at Wincanton include areas of high flood risk to the south and to the north east, a high quality historic environment within the Conservation Area and the presence of European Protected Species.






A Regeneration Action Plan for Wincanton is a key priority for the District Council and this is referred to in more detail in Section 11 – Town Centre Regeneration and Retail.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.



**South Somerset HELAA 2018
Wincanton & Stoke Trister**

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development
nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted
planning permission if an application were to be submitted

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Wincanton as at 31st March 2018 is 343 dwellings. Given the findings of the HELAA work and constraints, there is little choice in terms of directions of growth at Wincanton. The HELAA identified seven suitable, achievable and available sites to the south west of the town. There are also two identified within the settlement boundary.

The Wincanton neighbourhood area was designated in 2014. Since then, the Neighbourhood Plan has been the subject of independent examination and a referendum. More than 50% of those who voted in the Referendum said 'Yes', and the Neighbourhood Plan is now 'made'. It should be noted that it does not propose any housing or employment allocations. The main objectives within the Neighbourhood Plan are as follows:

- Identifying the most sustainable locations for development
- Housing suitable for Wincanton's population
- New employment space near the A303
- Make the town centre more attractive to users
- Protect open spaces & improve walking & cycling routes

All of the sites considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process with the findings presented in Appendix III. Given the findings of the HELAA in terms of suitable, available and achievable site there is little choice in terms potential directions of growth for any large-scale growth at the settlement. Any number or combinations of the identified suitable, achievable or available sites could brought forward through the Council's site selection process. It is therefore not considered necessary to undertake a formal appraisal of options at Wincanton. Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA.

Local Market Towns

Ansford and Castle Cary

Spatial portrait

The combined settlements of Ansford and Castle Cary lie on the southern edge of the Somerset Levels beside the River Cary. It is an attractive market town with four Conservation Areas and many listed buildings. It has a vibrant and attractive town centre with a number of independent retailers and eateries which serve a wider rural hinterland.

The combined settlements have a population of 3,332. The relatively isolated nature of the town and its largely rural hinterland means that it serves a more strategic service role than one may expect.

The town's working age population of just over 50% is lower than the average across the County. The town's major employers are based on the Torbay Road Industrial estate and include Centaur Services, Royal Canin, and Snell 2000 Ltd. Of those people in work, nearly 66% leave the area for employment - more than the average across the District. The largest sector in the town is manufacturing with 22% of all jobs. There are local concerns about high amounts of HGV traffic in the area. The Cary Moor Environmental Centre and Recycling depot are about 2.0km to the south west at Dimmer.

Part of the reason a high proportion of people out-commute may be the proximity to rail services. To the north of the town Castle Cary railway station serves the West of England and Heart of Wessex lines. Station parking is currently restricted, although GWR have now acquired land adjacent to the station to provide additional parking spaces, which may offer the opportunity to enhance train services in future.

The town supports a full range of services including a secondary school, doctor's surgery, pharmacy, dentist, library, convenience store, post office and public houses, although the last remaining bank closed in October 2017. The town centre provides quality shopping with many niche and independent traders and a range of supplementary services. It is accessible by bus and has parking provision but there is congestion at peak times on Fore Street. The choice of convenience shopping is limited. The town centre is liable to flooding, but the main areas of Flood Zone are to the north of the railway line. The town centre has an historic character and much of it is designated a Conservation Area.






Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.

N



South Somerset HELAA 2018 Ansford & Castle Cary

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

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E/ANSF/0012/

E/ANSF/0011

E/ANSF/0008

E/ANSF/0001

E/ANSF/0007

E/ANSF/0500

E/ANSF/0009

E/ANSF/0010

E/CACA/0504

E/CACA/1101

E/CACA/0806

Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted planning permission if an application were to be submitted.

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Kilometers

Identifying options

A total of 559 new dwellings on several sites in Ansford and Castle Cary currently have planning permission but have not been commenced (as at 31st March 2018). The majority of these are within the adopted Local Plan Direction of Growth (Policy LMT1) to the north west. The direction of growth includes sites E/ANSF/0011 (has planning permission), E/ANSF/0008, E/ANSF/0001 (has planning permission) and E/ANSF/0007. Site E/CACA/0806 was carried over as an allocation from the previous Local Plan (1991 to 2011) and is allocated in the current adopted Local Plan (Policy SS5).

In terms of local aspirations, the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan Area was designated in June 2015; the Plan was Examined during March/April 2019. Subject to modification it was recommended that the Plan proceed to referendum. The Plan encourages and supports the early redevelopment of brownfield sites for housing within the settlement area (Policy HOU1). Policy HOU2 states that, *“While there remains a substantially greater supply of permissions for housing development within the NP area than the LP minimum requirement, further proposals for housing development within the direction of growth will be strongly resisted unless there is clear evidence that the additional housing will help meet a clearly identified local need for affordable or social housing (that need arising from within the NP area and its hinterland) that is not capable of being met elsewhere”*.

Given the findings of the HELAA (2018) there is little choice outside of the current direction of growth to deliver any kind of additional large-scale development. While there is the potential to extend the current direction of growth to the north west through site E/ANSF/0012, this is unlikely to be supported by the local community given the policies in the made Neighbourhood Plan. Any of the suitable, available and achievable sites could be considered further by the Council through the site selection process. All of the sites considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process with the findings presented in Appendix III.

It is not considered necessary to undertake a formal appraisal of options for Ansford and Castle Cary. Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA.

Langport and Huish Episcopi

Spatial portrait

Langport and Huish Episcopi is a small town in the north of the District, located on the banks of the River Parrett at the meeting of major roads that link the town with Taunton, Bridgwater and the A303.

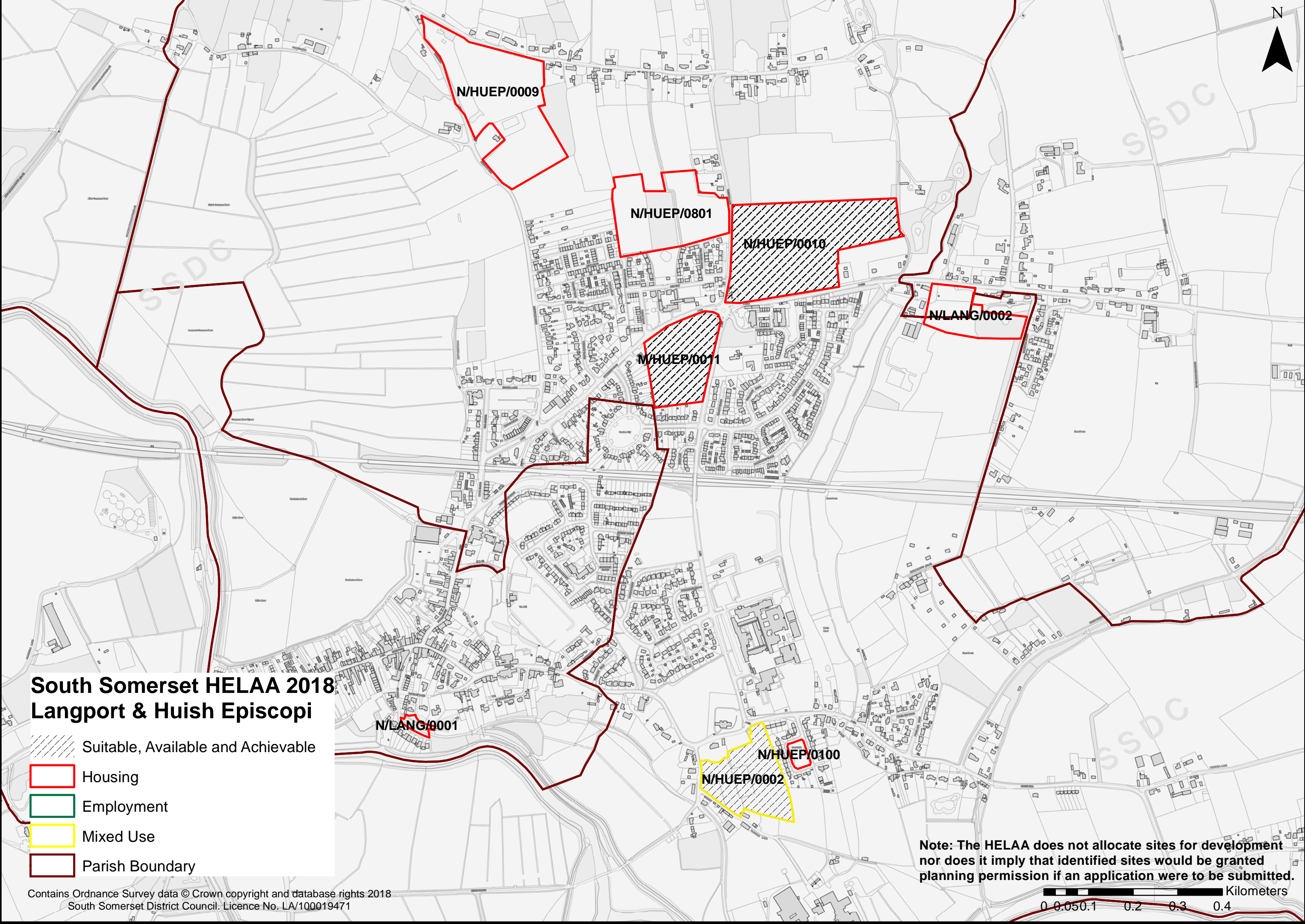
The settlement has a population of 3,055 people today, but with fewer people of a working age than the average across Somerset. The main employment area is to the west of the town at Westover Trading Estate. A large part of the town, including the whole town centre, is designated as a Conservation Area.

Langport and Huish Episcopi is located within a sensitive and rural landscape, largely defined by its proximity to the Somerset Levels and Moors; it possess a prominent tourism role. However, much of the town is surrounded by areas of high flood risk due to its proximity to the River Parrett and its flood plain which forms the Somerset Levels and Moors. The Somerset Levels and Moors are highly valued both in terms of wildlife (parts being internationally recognised for wildlife presence as a Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar), and cultural and recreation opportunities. Tourism is important for the town with many small businesses being linked to providing facilities and attractions for visitors who value opportunities to walk, cycle and ride horses in the Somerset Levels and Moors, particularly along the Parrett trail.






As the wider area around the town is sparsely populated, Langport and Huish Episcopi functions as an important settlement serving the surrounding rural community. Some of the key services and community facilities include primary and secondary schools, sports hall, supermarket, and library, although the town no longer has a bank. Langport and Huish Episcopi has a small town centre that provides a range of service goods to cater for the day-to-day needs of the residents; convenience retailing in the town is dominated by a single supermarket, whilst the comparison sector is mainly limited to independent and specialist stores. There is a regular bus service to Yeovil and Taunton, and a national cycle route passes through the town.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.



**South Somerset HELAA 2018
Langport & Huish Episcopi**

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted planning permission if an application were to be submitted.

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Langport and Huish Episcopi as at 31st March 2018 is 2,204 dwellings. The HELAA identified three sites as being suitable, available and achievable within the Parish. All of these sites have been appraised through the SA process with the findings presented in Appendix III. Given the findings of the HELAA there is little choice in terms potential directions of growth for any large-scale development at Langport and Huish Episcopi. Any of the sites could be brought forward and considered in more detail through the Council's site selection process. It is therefore not considered necessary to undertake a formal appraisal of options at this settlement. Different levels of growth can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA.

Somerton

Spatial portrait

Somerton has a population of 3,693 people. It is a relatively compact town, set above the Cary Valley with the central core concentrated upon the market place and church. The town centre and an area to the east of the town is designated as a Conservation Area. Recent residential growth has spread to the west of the town centre, and the main employment area is the Bancombe Road Trading Estate to the north-west.

Somerton is located in a rural setting and is important in serving the needs of residents in the rural north of South Somerset. In terms of retail, Somerton has a reasonably healthy, well-kept and attractive town centre with a range of independent stores including a small supermarket and specialist food stores that meet the day to day needs of local residents. Some of the other key services in Somerton are a library, doctor's surgery, banks, and a primary school.

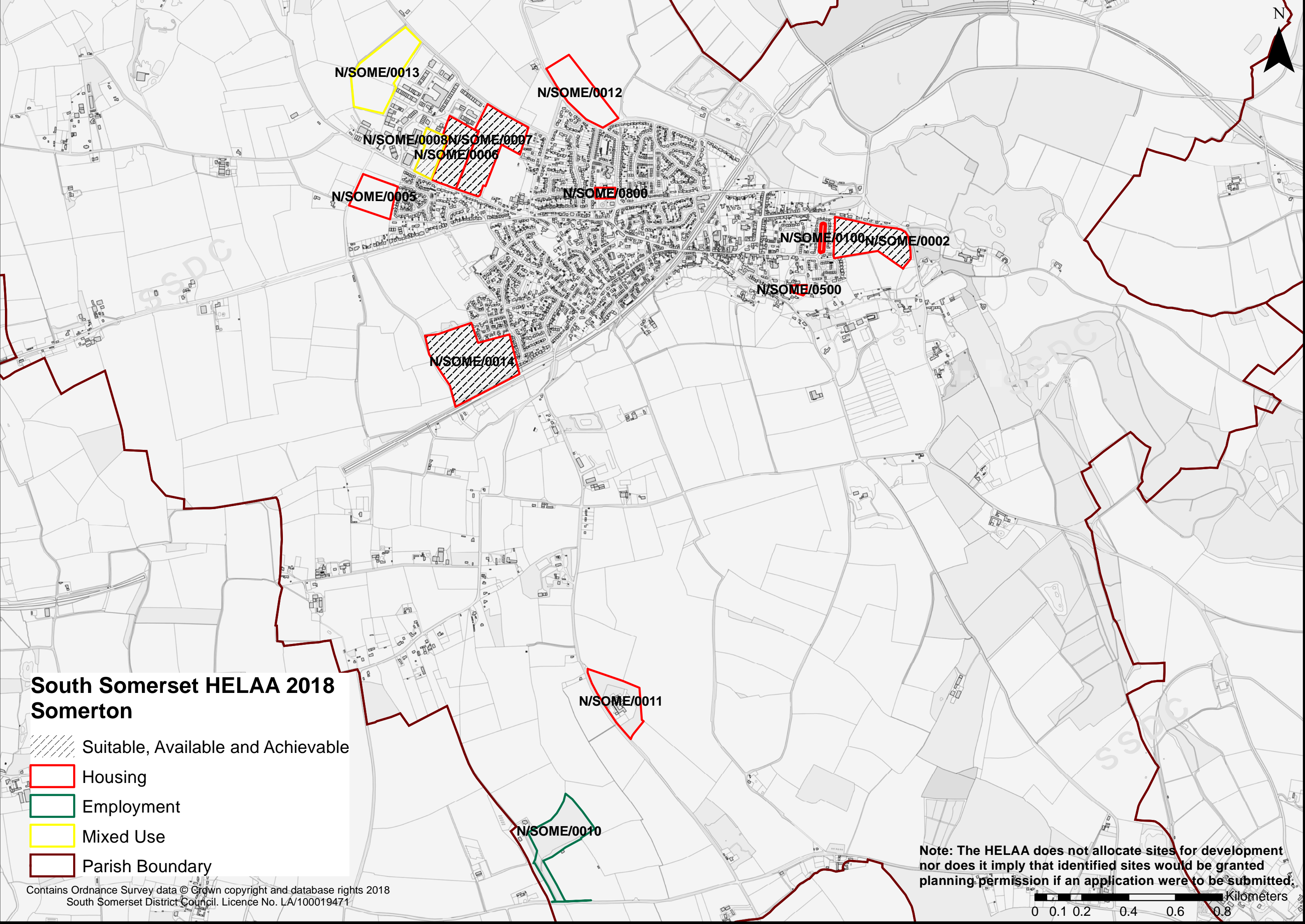
The proportion of economically inactive people in the town is higher than average in Somerset, but unemployment levels are very low. The largest proportion of jobs are in manufacturing, but this is lower than average in the District.

Public transport to the larger settlements of Yeovil, Taunton and Street is relatively good with a regular bus service, although links to other parts of the District are poor. A national cycle route passes through the town. However, based upon 2018 Census data, it would indicate that self-containment is relatively low with over 60% of Somerton residents travelling to work elsewhere.






Some of the key environmental issues at Somerton include areas of high flood risk to the north, east and south of the town; a high quality historic environment; and the presence of protected species near the town, including Bats, Large Blue butterflies, dormice and Bewick Swans.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.



South Somerset HELAA 2018 Somerton

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

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Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development
nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted
planning permission if an application were to be submitted.

0 0.1 0.2 0.4 0.6 0.8 Kilometers

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Somerton as at 31st March 2018 is 434 dwellings. The HELAA identified six sites as being suitable, available and achievable.

A draft Community Plan was prepared in March 2018. An emerging theme is a local desire to reduce density of future developments, ensuring that green spaces are included and maintained, that landscaping within new developments enhances the environment, encourages wildlife and preserves green spaces, where possible. There is also a local aspiration for a new combined school on a single site and SCC have acquired land for this purpose north of the Bancombe Road Trading Estate.

It should be noted that site N/SOME/0006 has planning permission for 9 dwellings including an extension of the Somerton Business Park (17/02850/OUT). Site N/SOME/0007 has a pending planning application for 130 dwellings (18/034830/OUT).

Excluding the small site (N/SOME/0800) situated within the existing settlement, based on the remaining five sites there appears to potentially be three choices in terms of growth at Somerton. These are as follows:

1. Further growth to the East at site N/SOME/0002;
2. Further growth to the south east at site N/SOME/0014; and
3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement at sites N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008.

Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA. For the purposes of the appraisal it is therefore assumed that the options could deliver a similar scale of growth (housing and employment), including any associated improvements to community infrastructure.

Appraisal of options

SA Theme: Communities			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	1	3	1
Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
Discussion	<p>All three options perform equally in terms of providing sufficient housing to meet the identified housing needs of the community, as it is assumed that all options could deliver the same quantum of growth.</p> <p>Option 1 and Option 3 are also considered to perform broadly on a par in terms of delivering housing at locations which will help meet community needs. Although Option 2 is closest to the services and facilities of the town centre, Option 1 is also considered to be walking/cycling distance to the centre and is additionally close to existing employment options at the town's west. This suggests that Options 1 and 3 are best placed to meet a range of local needs, whereas Option 2 is more distant.</p>		

SA Theme: Economy and Employment			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	3	3	1
Significant effect?	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>As the only option to potentially propose some degree of additional employment land (in the form of a mixed use site adjacent to the Somerton Business Park) Option 3 is considered to perform most strongly. Option 3 would also deliver substantial housing growth adjacent to Somerton Business Park from which walking and cycling connectivity could be easily provided. This further boosts the option's performance as easy access between the new development and the employment site could help ensure that workers are able to remain living locally or relocate in order to do so.</p> <p>Option 1 is furthest from the employment site at the business park but is closest to the town centre and its services and facilities. This is positive in terms of supporting town centre vitality as it could help ensure that a greater number of residents would access the town centre under Option 1 because development would be a five minute walk away, incentivising the use of Somerton's services over travelling elsewhere for equivalent services. Option 3 is also likely to deliver development which is</p>		

	<p>within reasonable walking and cycling distance from the town centre at under 1 mile away. Option 2 is the only option which would direct development to a location with poor direct access to the town centre. In the absence of a link to the existing estate roads at Sevenacres to the east of Option 2, town centre access would be circuitous and this could have potential to discourage some users from shopping in the town.</p> <p>All options are considered to perform on a par in relation to facilitating working from home and enhancing/ providing education facilities.</p> <p>On balance it is considered that Option 3 performs most strongly as it bolsters the existing employment site at Somerton Business Park both through the delivery of new employment land (via a mixed use site) and the delivery of well located and housing with good access to local employment options. It also offers potential to sustain the vitality of the town centre through the addition of new service users within reasonable walking distance.</p>
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SA Theme: Health and Equalities			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	1	3	1
Significant effect?	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>None of the options are notably more likely to deliver new healthcare or community facilities. However, Options 1 and 3 are considered to perform most strongly in terms of accessing existing services, particularly the Buttercross Health Centre in the town centre. Both of these options, particularly Option 1, will support healthy transport choices for many local journeys given their proximity to the town centre, whereas Option 3 is considered to be notably more peripheral. There are equalities implications of this in respect of ensuring access to services for more vulnerable or immobile groups in the community, particularly elderly residents and young families, especially those without access to private vehicles.</p> <p>It is considered that Options 1 and 3 therefore perform on a par in relation to Health and Equalities, whilst Option 2 performs more weakly both in terms of proximity to existing community facilities and potential to support healthy forms of transport to reach them.</p>		

SA Theme: Transport and Movement			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	2	3	1
Significant effect?	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>Somerton does not have its own railway station and is several miles away from the nearest settlement with a station (i.e. Taunton to the west and Castle Cary to the east). Access to railway stations is therefore considered not relevant to differentiating between the options. However, the town is linked with the higher tier service centres of Taunton, Yeovil and Wells by regular bus services which serve the town centre. None of the sites are served directly by these bus services, though Option 3 is well located for access to bus stops on the B3153 for services between Taunton and Yeovil. Options 1 and 2 do not appear to offer similar access to existing bus services, with Option 2 considered most distant from services.</p> <p>Option 1 is considered to perform most strongly in relation to allowing sustainable movement as it is located within 5 minutes walk of the majority of town centre services. This offers potential for access to key services such as the primary school, supermarket and medical centre without the need to use a car. Option 3 is considered to be within reasonable walking and cycling distance of the town centre, whilst Option 2 is furthest away and offers the most circuitous route for pedestrians and cyclists, some of which would be along narrow and potentially unsuitable country lanes.</p> <p>In terms of access to the local and strategic road network, all of the options directly front onto local roads of limited existing capacity. Option 1 offers access to the B3151 via Acre Lane, though Acre Lane is narrow and could require enhancement to carry traffic in both directions, which would be necessary if the site were developed in full. Option 2 is accessible only via Ricksey Lane which is also a single track lane of limited capacity. Ricksey Lane connects the B3153 (Langport Road) with the B3165 (Sutton Road) which theoretically gives Option 2 good access to the road network should the lane be enhanced to carry traffic in both directions. However, potential to enhance the lane is critically limited by the single carriageway railway bridge south of Option 2 which would be very unlikely to be remodelled for development at the relatively limited scale proposed at Somerton. Option 3 would be accessible from Bancombe Road to the south and potentially Bradley Hill Lane to the north, plus potential for local road connectivity with Somerton Business Park to the west. Bancombe Road supports traffic in both directions and is therefore a more significant thoroughfare than those which provide access to the other options, though there could be potential for cumulative effects from development under Option 3 when viewed in the context of recently completed adjacent development.</p> <p>On balance it is considered that Option 3 performs most strongly in relation to the Transport and Movement SA theme based on the balance it strikes between its potential for supporting walking and cycling to the town centre services, its access to existing bus services and the higher capacity of the principal roads which provide site access.</p>		

SA Theme: Energy and Climate Change			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	1	2	1
Significant effect?	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>It is not possible to differentiate between the two options in terms of energy consumption or efficiency. Both options are assumed to have the same development potential and therefore the same level of opportunities to seek energy efficiency through measures such as design and materials.</p> <p>However, Options 1 and 3 are considered likely to have a slightly lower degree of car dependency than Option 2 given their better access to the town centre, though the need more most residents to access higher tier services and employment at other settlements is likely to be a constant across all options. The small scale of the settlement and its relative distance from other service centres is considered to mean that opportunities to improve green infrastructure networks are likely to be limited, though there could be potential to enhance direct walking and cycling provision between the town centre and Options 1 and 3 through the development process, cutting down the need to make local journeys by car.</p>		

SA Theme: Water Resources, Quality and Flooding			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	=	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>It is not possible to differentiate between the three options in terms of water resources and water quality as the scale of development potential at Somerton means none of the options is considered likely to result in either positive or negative effects.</p> <p>In terms of flooding, each site is unaffected by fluvial flood risk and therefore all perform on a par in this respect. In terms of surface water flooding there are some very localised areas of low risk either at the boundaries of each of the options but are so small as to have no bearing on the sites' development potential. It is therefore considered that it is not possible to differentiate between the options in terms of water resources, quality or flooding.</p>		

SA Theme: Soil and Land			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	3	1	1
Significant effect?	Yes - negative	No	No
Discussion	<p>Detailed agricultural land quality surveys have been undertaken around the full circumference of Somerton, including at each of the three options. The area containing Option 1 was found to be entirely Grade 3a, whilst the areas containing Options 2 and 3 were found to be Grade 3b. It follows that development under Option 1 would necessitate the loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land, whilst development under Options 2 and 3 would avoid any BMV loss. All options are comprised of greenfield sites and consequently it is not possible to differentiate between them in terms of promoting the use of previously developed land.</p> <p>On balance it is considered that Option 1 performs notably poorly as it results in the loss of BMV land, whilst Options 2 and 3 perform broadly on a par as neither of them impact BMV land and neither offer opportunities for directing development to previously developed land.</p>		

SA Theme: Biodiversity and Geodiversity			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	=	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>Somerton is not notably sensitive in biodiversity terms and there are no nationally or internationally designated sites or habitats likely to be directly affected development. A number of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are present around the periphery of the village, particularly Somerton Wood LWS to the east of the village and Littleton Hill LWS to the north. However, none of the options are considered likely to put these sites under direct pressure either in terms of disturbances from the development process or from subsequent recreational pressure from additional residents.</p> <p>Similarly, none of the options appear to offer notably greater potential for seeking biodiversity net gain or habitat networking in terms of their relationships with existing habitats or designated sites, though Option 3 is adjacent to a small expanse of unprotected woodland which could possibly have potential for enhancement through the development process.</p> <p>On balance, it is considered not possible to differentiate between the options with regard to biodiversity and that they all perform on a par.</p>		

SA Theme: Landscape and Townscape			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	3	2	1
Significant effect?	Yes - negative	No	No
Discussion	<p>The Somerton Peripheral Landscape Study (2008) finds that there is generally greater capacity to the west of the town than the east reflecting the flatter landform and lower landscape sensitivity of the west. In this context Options 2 and 3 perform strongly, with both found to have 'high' landscape capacity, the maximum possible rating. In the case of Option 2 this finding reflects the fact that there is very little oversight from surrounding locations and an urban fringe locations bounded on two sides by existing development and on a third by the mainline railway. Development could therefore come forward with minimal impact on the existing landscape setting of the town. Similarly, Option 3 is well contained by existing development and has little sense of connectivity with the wider landscape and countryside. The presence of the Somerton Business Park to the Option's west is a significant urbanising factor, as is the new development to the west. Again, development would not have a notable effect on the landscape setting of the town.</p> <p>By contrast, Option 1 at the east of the town is found by the Peripheral Landscape Study to be of 'moderate to low' and 'low' capacity. This reflects the significant contribution made by the openness and rurality of the option to the town's identity and landscape character as development under Option 1 could have an urbanising effect on the eastern approach to the town as well as affect views in and out of the historic core.</p> <p>On balance, Option 3 is considered to perform most strongly as it could offer potential to enhance the quality of the townscape on the western approach to the town where the business park currently creates a low-key, poor quality street scene. Option 2 is more peripheral and is not considered to afford a similar opportunity. Option 3 performs notably poorly in relation to Options 1 and 2.</p>		

SA Theme: Historic Environment			
Options	1. Further growth to the East (N/SOME/0002).	2. Further growth to the south east (N/SOME/0014)	3. Further growth between the Somerton Business Park and the existing settlement (N/SOME/0006, N/SOME/0007 and N/SOME/0008)
Rank	3	1	1
Significant effect?	Yes - negative	No	No
Discussion	<p>Option 1 appears to have notable potential for negative effects on the historic environment as it directs development to Site N/SOME/0002 which is entirely within the Somerton conservation area. Despite this, no individual designated historic assets would be directly affected, partly as the conservation area is large and its boundaries relatively loosely drawn in relation to the historic core of the village meaning the site is not within the setting of any listed buildings or structures. In this context the historic value of the site is considered to arise from the contribution of its openness to the wider historic setting of the village, including preserving rural views which contribute to its historic character. Development under Option 1 could therefore have potential to change this open character and in doing so compromise the setting and character of the historic village core and of the conservation area more broadly.</p> <p>Options 2 and 3 appear to have little heritage sensitivity as both are within the setting of contemporary development of no historic significance. Development under either option would not affect the historic setting or character of the village core nor any identified individual historic assets.</p>		

Rural Centres

Bruton

Spatial portrait

Bruton is situated in the east of the District, in the Brue Valley, a few miles north of the A303, about 4 miles from Castle Cary and 7 miles from Shepton Mallet. The A359 Frome to Yeovil road passes through the settlement.

Today, Bruton is one of the larger settlements in the District with a population of 3,045 residents. The topography and, hence, settlement has been heavily influenced by the River Brue. The majority of the settlement is built on the higher ground on the north side of the river and in recent years residential development has occurred to the north east of the town.

Nearly 45% of the settlement's economically active residents do not travel out of the area to work making the level of self-containment a little higher than across the District (District Average; 43%). The major employment sector is education, with four schools in the settlement (and

nearly all of local jobs are in this sector). There is also the Wyke Farms Cheese business, the Hauser and Wirth gallery, and the popular 'At The Chapel' restaurant. The challenge for Bruton is resisting any further loss of employment land and providing a range of opportunities to both live and work locally. In retail terms, whilst there is no large supermarket, there are a number of independent shops providing a range of convenience goods. There are a variety of community services including a doctor's surgery, library, and post office.

In addition to a regular bus service, residents in Bruton have access to rail services. The railway station, which is located on Station Road, is on the Heart of Wessex Line running from Bristol to Weymouth. A national cycle route runs through the settlement.

One of the key environmental issues in Bruton is the risk of flooding along the course of the River Brue and its tributary Combe Brook. As a result of a severe flood in 1982, a retention dam was built about one and half miles east of the town, the dam acts as a flow regulator to control the total amount of water in the river at Church Bridge without any human intervention.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.

N



SSDC

SSDC

SSDC

South Somerset HELAA 2018 Bruton

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

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E/BRUT/0009

E/BRUT/0003


E/BRUT/0006

E/BRUT/0002

E/BRUT/0007

E/BRUT/0008

**Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development
nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted
planning permission if an application were to be submitted.**

 Kilometers
0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Bruton as at 31st March 2018 is 87 dwellings. The HELAA identified three sites as being suitable, available and achievable.

A Town Plan Resident Survey was undertaken by the Town Council in the Autumn of 2016, and a Town Plan was published in 2017, which District Council Members have since endorsed. The Town Plan states that any major residential development should be on sites that the community support, and that the historic centre of the town and green spaces should be protected.

Based on the three sites identified in the HELAA there appears to be two choices in terms of further growth at Bruton. These are as follows:

1. Further growth to the East at site E/BRUT/0008; and
2. Further growth to the north west at sites E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006.

Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA. For the purposes of the appraisal it is therefore assumed that the options could deliver a similar scale of growth (housing and employment), including any associated improvements to community infrastructure.

Appraisal of options

SA Theme: Communities		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
Discussion	<p>Both options perform equally in terms of providing sufficient housing to meet the identified housing needs of the community, as it is assumed that both options could deliver the same quantum of growth. Long term significant positive effects are predicted in this respect.</p> <p>In recent years residential development has occurred to the north east of the town, as such it is considered that further growth to the east would lead to positive effects in terms of promoting the growth of existing communities and enhancing settlement identity. While positive effects in this respect are also anticipated for Option 2, E/BRUT/0002 is considered to be less well connected to the existing built up area and town centre than Option 1. Further growth to the east is therefore best performing of the two options.</p>	

SA Theme: Economy and Employment		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>The level of self-containment in Bruton is higher than across the district. The major employment sector is education, and the Manufacturing, Retail and Food and Accommodation Services sectors also employ large numbers of people in the town. Both Options are considered to lead to positive effects in terms of promoting access to employment as both have good access to the town centre, and sustainable transport options for those who out-commute. Further growth to the east under Option 1 however, is expected to lead to positive effects of greater significance than further growth to the north west, given it is located closer to the town centre, and is also closer to Bruton railway station for residents seeking employment outside of the town. Notably Bruton railway station provides services to larger centres such as Yeovil, Bath and Bristol.</p> <p>Both options have the potential to include employment land and infrastructure delivery to support the town, encouraging inward investment and supporting local economic growth. It is considered that both options would be able to deliver a similar level of infrastructure, and therefore options cannot be differentiated between in this respect. Nonetheless, it is considered that the delivery of infrastructure alongside development has the potential to lead to positive effects against this SA theme, although this is uncertain at this stage.</p>	

SA Theme: Health and Equalities		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>Bruton town centre has a good variety of services, with a number of independent shops providing a range of convenience goods. Both options are approximately 600m from the town centre, with reasonably good access to its services and facilities (including a doctor's surgery, library, and post office). However, it is noted that site E/BRUT0002 extends north of the settlement, and is approximately 1km from the town centre at its most distant point. Further growth to the north west is therefore seen to be less well connected to the town centre/ local community.</p> <p>Looking specifically at health services, there is a GP surgery located within the town, within 800m of E/BRUT/0008 (Option 1). In terms of Option 2, while site E/BRUT/0006 is within 600m of the GP surgery, this is over 1km from the furthest extent of E/BRUT/0002. Development of both options may support improvements to existing or delivery of new community infrastructure, contributing towards the positive expansion of the town. As set out above, the level of infrastructure delivery is expected to be equal under both growth options, and therefore neither option is best performing in this respect.</p>	

	It is predicted that growth around the town will have a positive effect on new and existing residents' quality of life and day-to-day neighbourhood satisfaction, creating more positively integrated communities. Both Growth Options have the potential for positive effect against housing as all will help to meet local need as identified through the SHMA (2016). ¹¹¹ However, as is the case for infrastructure delivery, the level of housing is expected to be equal under both growth options, and therefore neither option is best performing in this respect.
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SA Theme: Transport and Movement		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	Uncertain	Uncertain
Discussion	<p>The A351 Frome-Yeovil road passes through the settlement and the B3081 crosses the river at Church Bridge. Both sites within Option 2 are located along/in close proximity to the Frome Road, and it is therefore considered that development may exacerbate existing congestion issues along this road and through the town centre (notably in the High Street and Quaperlake Street). While Option 2 is located along the Frome Road, it is considered that development under both options may result in increased vehicular use in the town with the potential for long term adverse effects. Both options also have the potential to include enhancements/ improvements to services/ facilities and public transport. As set out above, the level of infrastructure delivery is expected to be equal under both growth options, and therefore neither option is best performing in this respect.</p> <p>When compared with other similar towns Bruton had higher parking pressure. On a non-market-day other towns had on average 67% of their parking spaces occupied. The figure for Bruton was 78%. The parking available in Bruton is different from that of other towns: a far higher proportion (66%) of it is on-street (20% in other towns) and a lower proportion short-stay (Bruton 26%, others 47%).¹¹² Growth of the town has the potential to exacerbate existing parking issues in the town, however as the level of housing is expected to be equal under both growth options, both options perform equally in this respect. As discussed above, both options have the potential to deliver infrastructure improvements which may include new/improved parking facilities. Again, both options are considered to perform equally in this respect.</p> <p>In terms of sustainable transport, residents have access to a regular bus service and rail services, and there is also a national cycle route which runs through the settlement. Option 2 is more accessible in terms of a bus stop than Option 1, given a bus stop is located along Frome Road, adjacent to E/BRUT/0002. Option 1 is within approximately 400m of a bus stop and therefore is also considered to have good access to this sustainable transport option. Bruton train station is accessible from both growth options, however Option 1 is considerably closer, being within 400m.</p>	

¹¹¹ JG Consulting (2016) Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

¹¹² Bruton Town Council (2017) Bruton Town Plan [online] available at <https://brutontowncouncil.gov.uk/the-bruton-town-plan-2017-is-here/>

SA Theme: Energy and Climate Change		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>In relation to climate change, key issues include the need to capitalise upon opportunities to design-in low carbon infrastructure to development from the outset, and therefore minimise additional CO₂ emissions associated with development. There are no significant differences between the options in terms of opportunities to design-in low carbon infrastructure, i.e. given there is no difference in quantum of housing growth between options.</p> <p>Both options present an opportunity to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change through providing improvements to the local green infrastructure network. It is considered that both options are able to deliver a similar level of infrastructure, and as such both options perform equally in this respect.</p>	

SA Theme: Water Resources, Quality and Flooding		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	2	1
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>One of the key environmental issues in Bruton is the risk of flooding along the course of the River Brue and its tributary Combe Brook. An area of land along the southern site boundary of E/BRUT/0008 (Option 1: Further growth to the east) is located within Flood Zone 3, which is of high risk of flooding. In terms of surface water flooding, an area of surface water flood risk coincides with the area of fluvial flood risk at E/BRUT/0008. In terms of Option 2, Further growth to the north west, there is a small area of high and medium risk of flooding to the north of E/BRUT/0002. Taking this into account, Option 1 (Further growth to the east) performs least well against this theme, as it will include the greatest proportion of land at risk of flooding.</p> <p>It is however considered that development under both Options could avoid the highest flood risk areas, and deliver suitable mitigation (including sustainable drainage systems) to ensure that development does not increase flood risk elsewhere.</p> <p>Both options are considered to perform equally in terms of demand for water, and impact on water quality.</p>	

SA Theme: Soil and Land		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	2	1
Significant effect?	Yes – negative	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>Both Options consist of Grade 2 and 3a best and most versatile agricultural land. As such, both Options would result in the loss of this resource, having a negative effect on this SA theme.</p> <p>In terms of Option 1 (Further growth to the east) the area of E/BRUT/0008 located south of Brewham Road (approximately half of the site) is Grade 2 land, and a considerable portion of the site immediately north of Brewham Road is located on Grade 3a land. Under Option 2 (Further growth to the north west), the northern extent of E/BRUT/0002 and eastern extent of E/BRUT/0006 are located on Grade 2 land, and a linear section of land along the western boundary of E/BRUT/0002 is located on Grade 3a land. While growth to the north west would result in some loss of BMV land, loss at Option 1 (Further growth to the east) would be greater and therefore Option 1 performs less well against the soil and land theme compared to Option 2.</p>	

SA Theme: Biodiversity and Geodiversity		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	2	1
Significant effect?	Uncertain	Uncertain
Discussion	<p>Neither of the options are in close proximity to internationally designated biodiversity sites. In terms of nationally designated sites, E/BRUT/0008 is within 150m of Bruton Railway Cutting Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). However, because it is a geological designation it is not likely to be affected by development given its distance from the site.</p> <p>In terms of locally designated sites, E/BRUT/0006 (within Growth Option 2) is located adjacent to Tolbury Mill Local Wildlife Site (LWS); an unimproved grassland site located on the other side of Coombe Street. Both Growth Options are also located within 600m of Hill's Wood LWS; a mixed broadleaved wood running north to south of the settlement. Development under both Growth Options has the potential to lead to adverse effects on these locally designated sites, notably through recreational disturbance and pollution. Suitable mitigation should be considered through development proposals.</p> <p>It is predicted that there may be some additional residual negative effects on biodiversity as a result of development, through loss of greenfield land, and any adverse effects on BAP priority habitats. However, it is also possible that options may include the delivery of biodiversity net gain, leading to positive effects through the creation of new habitats and improved connectivity throughout the area. Given housing and infrastructure delivery under both options is considered to be equal, both options perform similarly in this respect.</p>	

SA Theme: Landscape and Townscape		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	Uncertain	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>According to the Peripheral Landscape Study (2008) E/BRUT/0008 (Option 1) is predominately located within an area with moderate and high capacity to accommodate built development.¹¹³ Within Option 2, E/BRUT/0006 is located predominately within an area with moderate capacity, however also includes areas of moderate to low capacity, and low capacity to the south west of the site. E/BRUT/0002 is the most constrained of all sites in this respect, being located entirely within an area of low capacity to accommodate built development. As such, development under Option 1 is preferred, as it does not include areas of moderate to low, or low capacity to accommodate built development. Growth to the east under Option 1 is therefore considered likely to have a residual negative effect of less significance on the landscape, visual character and valley setting compared to Option 2. It is noted that any residual effects in the moderate capacity areas could be mitigated through the development design and layout, with the potential for growth to the east to lead to residual neutral effects against this SA theme. However, this is uncertain at this stage.</p>	

SA Theme: Historic Environment		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/BRUT/0008)	2. Further growth to the north west (E/BRUT/0002 and E/BRUT/0006)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>The sensitivity of the historic landscape has been characterised to some extent through the Peripheral Landscape Assessment (2008), and as such, the findings discussed under the 'Landscape and Townscape' SA Theme are also applicable for this SA Theme. In this respect, further growth to the east under Option 1 is better performing compared to Option 2.</p> <p>In terms of designated and non-designated heritage assets within Bruton, neither of the options are constrained. Both options are located outside of the historic core of the town (i.e. the town centre) where there is a concentration of listed buildings, and Bruton Conservation Area. As such, both options are anticipated to lead to neutral effects in this respect.</p>	

¹¹³ South Somerset District Council (2008) Peripheral Landscape Assessment - Bruton

Ilchester

Spatial portrait

Ilchester is situated five miles north of Yeovil, on the eastern fringe of the Somerset Levels and Moors, concentrated at a point where the River Yeo crosses the Fosse Way. It has a historic legacy and has many Scheduled Ancient Monuments, archaeological sites, and historic buildings including the 13th Century St Mary Major and the Church of St Andrews, both Grade II* Listed buildings. There is also a Conservation Area.

In 1940, the Royal Naval Air Station was commissioned at Yeovilton, and since then, it has grown to become one of the busiest military airfields in the UK, with helicopters operating out of the Station on a consistent and regular basis. Ilchester, being in close proximity to RNAS Yeovilton has accommodated development over recent years to provide housing for many service personnel and their families stationed at the air base.

As a result of its natural and historic constraints, the settlement is formed around two distinct points of growth. At the southern end, the main commercial area is formed around the historic core and, to the north, Northover is a recent growth area. Both are linked by linear development along the Fosse Way. The Historic Core is virtually completely surrounded by land within Flood Zone 3, the functional floodplain of the River Yeo, with certain parts of the built up area itself, including the linear development along Fosse Way also being within Flood Zone 3. The northern growth area has developed over the past 50 years or so, on gently rising ground, and is not subject to flooding or known archaeological constraints. This area includes the infant and junior schools (split site), a factory, a shop, and residential development, including housing for service personnel and their families stationed at nearby RNAS Yeovilton.

Today, Ilchester has a population of 1,246 people, however, the presence of RNAS Yeovilton, which has over 4,000 personnel on the base, swells this number considerably. Given the presence of RNAS Yeovilton, Ilchester is a strong location for employment. As a result of the number of personnel living in Ilchester, the level of self-containment is good with approximately 56% of people living and working in the same area¹⁵².

The settlement also provides a retail and community service role - there are a few convenience stores, a post office, infant and junior schools, and a doctor's surgery which has recently merged with the one at Somerton. There are regular bus services to Yeovil, Taunton and Street.






Key environmental issues affecting potential new development include flooding and the presence of archaeological remains. Much of the southern half of the town is an Area of High Archaeological Potential and also adheres to noise constraints from the airbase.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.



South Somerset HELAA 2018 Ilchester

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

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SSDC

SSDC

SSDC

E/ILCH/0102

E/ILCH/0002

E/YEOT/0001


E/ILCH/0101

E/ILCH/0001/10

E/ILCH/0100

E/ILCH/0002/10A

**Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development
nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted
planning permission if an application were to be submitted.**

 Kilometers
00.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Ilchester as at 31st March 2018 is 161 dwellings. The HELAA only identified one site as being suitable, available and achievable. Given the lack of suitable, available and achievable sites at this settlement no potential growth options have been identified. It is therefore not considered necessary to undertake a formal appraisal of growth options at this settlement. Different levels of growth can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the site identified in the HELAA.

Martock and Bower Hinton

Spatial portrait

Martock is a small, attractive town in central South Somerset, on the southern edge of the Somerset Levels and Moors and just off the busy A303. Mill Brook and Hurst Brook flow between Martock and Bower Hinton to the south, before joining the River Parrett to the west. The town is surrounded by gradual undulating hills that are regarded as having high landscape value. It is well connected to Yeovil, which is situated seven miles to the southeast.





Martock and Bower Hinton have a joint Conservation Area incorporating various listed buildings along the main road between the two settlements. Listed buildings are concentrated at the historic centres of Martock, Hurst, and Bower Hinton. Areas of flood risk run through the centre from east to west between Martock and Bower Hinton. The land either side of the streams has been identified as part of the functional flood plain.

The population of Martock parish is 4,188. The town has a good variety of services, however self-containment is an issue. Travel to work data shows that about 80% of the population out commute with many going to Yeovil, but also the Ilchester area. The town is home to many small businesses that are clustered principally at Martock Industrial Park and the out of town Parrett Works. Redevelopment of sites, such as Paulls Court, has resulted in a loss of employment land. Providing more employment opportunities in Martock/ Bower Hinton could potentially reduce the currently high level of out commuting.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.

South Somerset HELAA 2018 Martock

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

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N/MART/0029
N/MART/0033
N/MART/0010B
N/MART/0032
N/MART/0101
N/MART/0039
N/MART/0500
N/MART/0102
N/MART/0037
N/MART/0025
N/MAR/0035
N/MART/0001/10
N/MART/0030
N/MART/0031
N/MART/0013
N/MART/0005
N/MART/0003/10
N/MART/0002/10
N/MART/0004/10
N/MART/0023
N/MART/0024
N/MART/0034
N/MART/0038
N/MART/0038
N/MART/0036
N/STHA/0004
N/STHA/0005

Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted planning permission if an application were to be submitted.

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 0.75 1 Kilometers

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Martock and Bower Hinton as at 31st March 2018 is 120 dwellings. The HELAA identified seven sites as being suitable, available and achievable.

The Parish of Martock was designated a Neighbourhood Area for the purposes of a Neighbourhood Plan in April 2016 and a Resident Survey was completed in 2017. The importance of health facilities and shops seem to be greater priorities for the local community than, for example, play areas and sports facilities. Many people are unhappy with traffic and parking in the area, with congestion in North Street being frequently mentioned, also HGVs in the centre, and vehicle speeds.

Excluding the small site (N/MART/0013) in the south, based on the remaining five sites there appears to potentially be two choices in terms of growth at Martock and Bower Hinton. These are as follows:

1. Further growth to the West at sites N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B; and
2. Further growth to the South East at sites N/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035.

Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA. For the purposes of the appraisal it is therefore assumed that the options could deliver a similar scale of growth (housing and employment), including any associated improvements to community infrastructure.

Appraisal of options

SA Theme: Communities		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
Discussion	<p>Both options perform equally in terms of providing sufficient housing to meet the identified housing needs of the community, as it is assumed that both options could deliver the same quantum of growth. Long term significant positive effects are predicted in this respect.</p> <p>It is considered that further growth to the west would lead to positive effects in terms of promoting the growth of existing communities and enhancing settlement identity. While positive effects in this respect are also anticipated for growth to the south east, it is recognised that N/MART/0035 is less well connected to the existing built up area than Option 1, extending development further into the open landscape and altering the existing settlement pattern. However, sites to the south east of the town are better connected to the town centre than sites to the west, providing accessibility to services and facilities. Overall, it is considered that the options cannot be differentiated between against this SA theme.</p>	

SA Theme: Economy and Employment		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>The primary employer within the settlement is manufacturing, followed by health; with retail, and construction in third.¹¹⁴ Martock & Bower Hinton supports small businesses that are clustered principally at Martock Industrial Park and the out of town Parrett Works. Martock Industrial Park is located to the north west of Martock, adjacent to N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B. Option 2 (further growth to the west) therefore performs positively in terms of providing access to employment and supporting self-containment in the town. This will contribute positively towards addressing the high level of out-commuting currently seen; travel to work data shows that about 80% of the population out commute, mainly to Yeovil and also the Ilchester area¹¹⁵. Martock & Bower Hinton is located just off the A303, which is a strategic transport route, and as such it is considered that residents will continue to utilise the A303 to access employment (i.e. in Yeovil and Ilchester as discussed above). It is recognised that sustainable travel opportunities are poor within the settlement, with no significant difference identified between the two options in this respect.</p> <p>The SSDC Monitoring Database shows that there has been little development of employment land or floorspace in Martock & Bower Hinton, with an overall loss of employment floorspace recorded. Growth options have the potential to include employment land and infrastructure delivery to support the town, encouraging inward investment and supporting local economic growth. It is considered that both options would be able to deliver a similar level of infrastructure, and therefore options cannot be differentiated between in this respect. Nonetheless, it is considered that the delivery of infrastructure alongside development has the potential to lead to positive effects against this SA theme, although this is uncertain at this stage.</p>	

¹¹⁴ Business Register and Employment Survey, NOMIS, 2015

¹¹⁵ ONS MSOA Level Travel to Place of Work Data

SA Theme: Health and Equalities		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	2	1
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>The Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study (2017) identifies that the comparison offer in the town centre is very limited, with below average provision of comparison shops.¹¹⁶ Looking specifically at health services, there is a GP surgery located to the south of the town, within 800m of Option 2 (further growth to the south east). While N/MART/0027 within Option 1 (further growth to the west) also has good access to the GP surgery, N/MART/0010/B is approximately 1.3km away. Further growth to the south east under Option 2 is therefore the preferred option in this respect; being better placed to access the town centre, which includes a level of day-to-day services and facilities. However, given the low comparison offer in the town centre, there is a large flow of expenditure to Yeovil. Proposed growth may exacerbate this issue, with a continued high level of residents travelling out of Martock & Bower Hinton to access services and facilities. This is likely to result in low levels of neighbourhood satisfaction and community cohesion.</p> <p>Development of both options has the potential to support improvements to existing or delivery of new community infrastructure, addressing levels of out-community and contributing towards the positive expansion of the town. The level of infrastructure delivery is expected to be equal under both options, and therefore a best performing option cannot be identified in this respect.</p> <p>It is predicted that growth around the town will nonetheless have a positive effect on new and existing residents' quality of life, creating more positively integrated communities. Both options have the potential for a positive effect against housing as all will help to meet local need as identified through the SHMA (2016).¹¹⁷ However, as is the case for infrastructure delivery, the level of housing is expected to be equal under both options, and therefore neither option is best performing in this respect.</p>	

¹¹⁶ Lichfields (2017) South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centre Uses Study

¹¹⁷ JG Consulting (2016) Mendip, Sedgemoor, South Somerset and Taunton Deane Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

SA Theme: Transport and Movement		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	Uncertain	Uncertain
Discussion	<p>Martock & Bower Hinton is located just off the A303, which is a strategic transport route connecting the town with Yeovil and other surrounding centres. Travel to work data shows that about 80% of the population out commute with many accessing Yeovil and the Ilchester area.¹¹⁸ Further growth to the south east would provide residents with good access to the A303 and surrounding centres; however, this would exacerbate levels of out-commuting, increase congestion on the road network, continuing reliance on the car as primary mode of transport. Given the limited public transport offer in Martock & Bower Hinton, it is considered that these effects would also be seen through the delivery of growth to the west. Neither option is well located in terms of access to sustainable travel, with existing provision including a limited bus service from the town to Taunton and Yeovil. The nearest train station to Martock & Bower Hinton is Yeovil, approximately 8.5 miles away.</p> <p>It is however considered that both options have the potential to include enhancements/ improvements to services/ facilities and public transport. As set out above, the level of infrastructure delivery is expected to be equal under both growth options, and therefore neither option is best performing in this respect.</p> <p>Given the lack of sustainable transport options and high reliance on the car for travel, parking pressure is also an issue for the town; with congestion in North Street being frequently identified by local residents as an area of concern. Further growth to the west or south east of the town has the potential to exacerbate existing parking issues, however, growth may also deliver infrastructure improvements such as new/improved parking facilities. As discussed above, both options are considered to perform equally in this respect.</p>	

¹¹⁸ ONS MSOA Level Travel to Place of Work Data

SA Theme: Energy and Climate Change		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>In relation to climate change, key issues include the need to capitalise upon opportunities to design-in low carbon infrastructure to development from the outset, and therefore minimise additional CO₂ emissions associated with development. There are no significant differences between the options in terms of opportunities to design-in low carbon infrastructure, i.e. given there is no difference in quantum of housing growth between options.</p> <p>Both options present an opportunity to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change through providing improvements to the local green infrastructure network. It is considered that both options are able to deliver a similar level of infrastructure, and as such both options perform equally in this respect.</p>	

SA Theme: Water Resources, Quality and Flooding		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	2	1
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>Mill Brook and Hurst Brook flow between Martock and Bower Hinton to the south, before joining the River Parrett to the west. In this context, Flood Zones 2 and 3 run through the south of Martock and the north of Bower Hinton. In terms of Option 1 (further growth to the west) there is a small area of Flood Zone 3 running east to west through the centre of N/MART/0039, and there is an area of Flood Zone 2 in the south eastern corner of N/MART/0037. Option 2 (growth to the south east) however is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 which is of low risk of flooding (however it is noted that there is an area of Flood Zone 2/3 adjacent to the north western boundary of N/MART/0025).</p> <p>In terms of surface water flooding, areas of medium/ high flood risk coincide with areas of fluvial flood risk discussed above. As such, it is considered that further growth to the south east under Option 2 is best performing as the sites within this option do not contain areas at risk of flooding.</p> <p>It is however considered that development under Option 1 (Further growth to the West) could avoid the highest flood risk areas, and deliver suitable mitigation (including sustainable drainage systems) to ensure that development does not increase flood risk elsewhere.</p> <p>Both options are considered to perform equally in terms of demand for water, and impact on water quality.</p>	

SA Theme: Soil and Land		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>Both options consist of Grade 3a best and most versatile agricultural land. As such, both Growth Options would result in some loss of this resource, having a negative effect on this SA theme.</p> <p>In terms of Option 1 (Further growth to the west) the entirety of N/MART/0037, N/MART/0010B, N/MART/0032, and a significant proportion of N/MART/0039 is located within Grade 3a land. Within Option 2 (Further growth to the south east), the entirety of N/MART/0025, and a significant proportion of N/MART/0035 is located within Grade 3a land.</p> <p>Given almost the entirety of both options are located on Grade 3a agricultural land, it is not possible to differentiate between them. Significant long term negative effects on soil and land are anticipated under both options.</p>	

SA Theme: Biodiversity and Geodiversity		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>In terms of internationally/nationally designated biodiversity sites, Somerset Levels and Moors Special Protection Area (SPA)/ Site for Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located approximately 3km from Option 1 (Further growth to the west), and approximately 4km from Option 2 (Further growth to the South East). Given the distance from the site, significant effects on the Somerset Levels and Moors are not anticipated through the delivery of either option.</p> <p>Neither of the options contain or are adjacent to any locally designated sites for biodiversity. It is however predicted that there may be residual negative effects on biodiversity as a result of development proposed through loss of greenfield land, and any adverse effects on BAP priority habitats. However, it is also possible that options may include the delivery of biodiversity net gain, leading to positive effects through the creation of new habitats and improved connectivity throughout the area. Given housing and infrastructure delivery under both options is considered to be equal, both options perform similarly in this respect.</p>	

SA Theme: Landscape and Townscape		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>The town is surrounded by undulating hills that are regarded as having high landscape value. According to the Peripheral Landscape Study (2008) with the exception of N/MART/0010/B, all sites within Option 1 (further growth to the west) are located within an area with high capacity to accommodate built development.¹¹⁹ This is likely to be due to the location of the sites on the settlement edge, creating small extensions to the built up area and in-keeping with the existing settlement pattern. N/MART/0010/B is located within an area with moderate capacity, given it extends further into the open landscape to the west of the settlement. Option 1 (further growth to the west) is therefore anticipated to lead to significant negative effects against this SA theme.</p> <p>In terms of Option 2 (further growth to the south east) both sites are predominately located within an area of low capacity to accommodate built development, likely due to the potential impact on the shallow hillsides and topographical setting north and north east of Martock.¹²⁰ The remainder of both sites, a small linear area along the south western boundary, is located within an area of moderate-low capacity, given this adjoins the existing built up area.</p> <p>Taking the above into consideration, development under Option 1 (Further growth to the West) is preferred, given it is of high and moderate capacity to accommodate built development. It is noted that any residual effects in the moderate capacity areas could be mitigated through the development design and layout, with the potential for growth to the west to lead to residual neutral effects against this SA theme. However this is uncertain at this stage.</p>	

¹¹⁹ South Somerset District Council (2008) Peripheral Landscape Assessment – Martock

¹²⁰ Ibid.

SA Theme: Historic Environment		
Options	1. Further growth to the West (N/MART/0037, N/MART/0039, N/MART/0032 and N/MART/0010B)	2. Further growth to the South East (E/MART/0025 and N/MART/0035)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>The sensitivity of the historic landscape has been characterised to some extent through the Peripheral Landscape Assessment (2008), and as such, the findings discussed under the 'Landscape and Townscape' SA Theme are also applicable for this SA Theme. In this respect, further growth to the west is best performing.</p> <p>In terms of designated and non-designated heritage assets within the settlement; Martock and Bower Hinton have a joint Conservation Area incorporating a concentration of Listed Buildings, located along the main road between the two settlements and including the majority of the town centre. Neither of the options are significantly constrained in this respect, being located outside of the historic core of the town, and considerably distant from heritage assets. The only exception to this is N/MART/0037 within Option 1 (further growth to the west) which is located within 150m of the Conservation Area. However, given the location of the school between the site and the Conservation Area, it is considered that any adverse effects on views/setting would be minor. As such, both options are not considered to lead to significant effects in this respect.</p> <p>Most of Martock & Bower Hinton is covered by archaeological sites but as most of the sites are already within the built area, they do not appear pose a significant constraint to the settlement's growth.¹²¹</p>	

¹²¹ South Somerset District Council (Settlement Profile: Martock & Bower Hinton)

Milborne Port

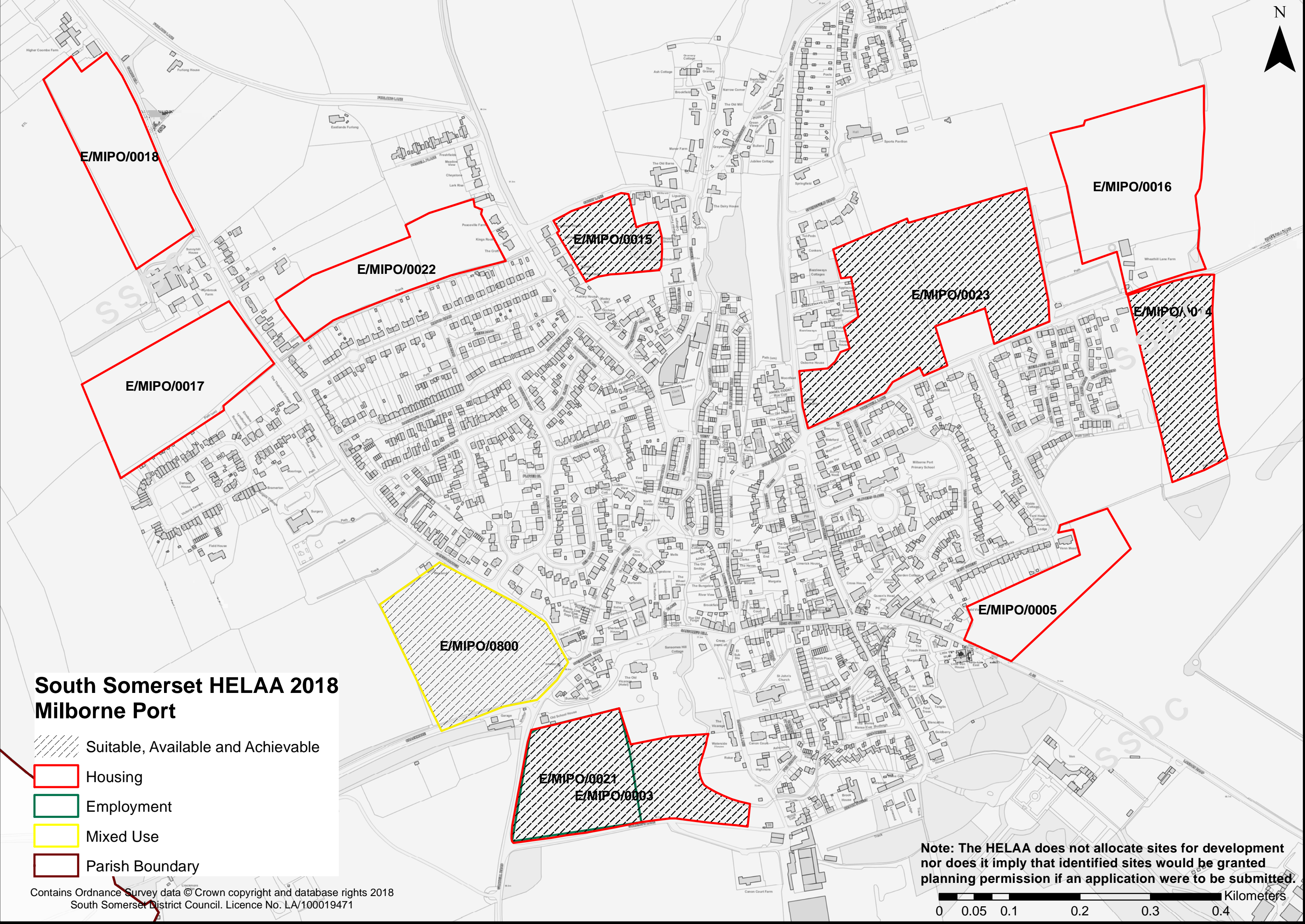
Spatial portrait

Milborne Port is located in the south-east of the District near the Dorset border and the edge of the Blackmore Vale. The River Gascoigne flows south through the village, and the A30 runs west to east through the centre, providing a direct road connection to the larger towns of Sherborne (3 miles away) and Yeovil (8 miles), both to the west. There is access to railway stations at Yeovil and Sherborne. Milborne Port is noted for its 'New Town' Conservation Area in the west of the village with a second Conservation Area encompassing the village centre. Much of the countryside surrounding the village is Best and Most Versatile agricultural land, also considered to be of high landscape value, including a Historic Garden at Ven House (itself a Grade 1 listed building) to the south east. Areas of flood risk run through the centre from the north to the south and there are also groundwater protection zones in the vicinity of Milborne Port.






The population is 2,954. Self-containment is an issue; a lack of jobs in Milborne Port has resulted in high levels (71%) of out commuting. More employment opportunities in the settlement could potentially reduce this level of out-commuting.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.

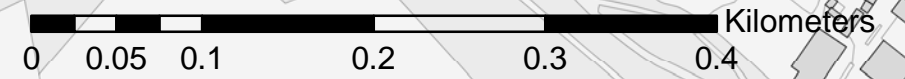


South Somerset HELAA 2018 Milborne Port

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

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Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted planning permission if an application were to be submitted.



Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in Milborne Port Hinton as at 31st March 2018 is 105 dwellings. The HELAA identified five sites as being suitable, available and achievable, which are spread around the edges of the settlement. A planning application is pending for 65 dwellings on a smaller parcel of land in site E/MIPO/0023.

In terms of local aspirations the Milborne Port Community Plan was produced in 2010 and is now the subject of a review. A public 'planning for real' exercise has been undertaken; a residents' survey carried out, and a housing needs assessment is also underway; but it is probably too early at the time of writing to identify any particular emerging themes.

Given the findings of the HELAA there appears to be two choices in terms of the direction of future growth at the settlement; growth to the South West (comprising of sites E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) or to the growth to the East (comprising of E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023). Site E/MIPO/0015 does not fall within either of these directions of growth but is not comparable in terms of scale for it to be considered as a standalone option. It could come forward under either or the identified options or not depending on the findings of the site selection process. For the purposes of the SA, site E/MIPO/0015 will be considered a constant under both options.

At this stage, it is considered that there are two options for future growth at Milborne Port. These are as follows:

1. Further growth to the East at sites E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023, including E/MIPO/0015 in the north; and
2. Further growth to the South West at sites E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003, including E/MIPO/0015 in the north.

Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA. For the purposes of the appraisal it is therefore assumed that the options could deliver a similar scale of growth (housing and employment), including any associated improvements to community infrastructure.

Appraisal of options

SA Theme: Communities		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
Discussion	Both options perform equally in terms of providing sufficient housing to meet the identified housing needs of the community, as it is assumed that both options could deliver the same quantum of growth. Long term significant positive effects are predicted in this respect.	

SA Theme: Economy and Employment		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>By introducing new users of the town's shops and services both options would likely contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre. Similarly, there is a small area of existing employment land in the town which may potentially be boosted by the provision of additional local housing for workers under either option.</p> <p>However, Option 2 delivers a mixed use site adjacent to the A30 which may have potential to include employment floor space in a potentially attractive location for employers as access to the strategic road network is good. In the context of the local area the majority of new residents would likely have to commute to higher tier service centres to access employment, and this may position Option 2 as slightly preferable given its good access to the A30.</p> <p>However, in most other respects related to the Economy and Employment SA theme it is considered that there is little to differentiate between the two options and they perform broadly on a par overall.</p>	

SA Theme: Health and Equalities		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>Option 2 would deliver growth almost adjacent to the existing Milborne Port Surgery on Gainsborough Road offering good potential for easy access. In practice, however, Milborne Port is a small settlement and neither of the options deliver growth further than a mile from the surgery.</p> <p>In terms of facilitating healthy lifestyles, development under either option could potentially include walking and cycling paths to the local services at the village centre, though would be unlikely to contribute more strategic walking and cycling infrastructure. Again, the small scale of the settlement means that most of its services are within walking distance for the average user, though many needs will continue to be met at higher tier service centres which are beyond reasonable walking and cycling distance.</p> <p>In this context the two options are considered to perform broadly on a par.</p>	

SA Theme: Transport and Movement		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	2	1
Significant effect?	No	Uncertain
Discussion	<p>In terms of access to the road network, Option 2 directs growth to locations which are immediately adjacent to the A30 at the south west of the settlement. Development under Option 2 could access the A30 from the south via Goathill Road and from the north via Gainsborough, avoiding the need to provide direct access to the A30 itself which could be challenging if significant junction remodelling or traffic calming were required.</p> <p>By contrast, Option 1 directs growth to the east of the settlement which is served by local roads and low capacity lanes. Of particular note is Wheathill Lane at the east of the settlement. Over 40 new dwellings have been delivered in the last 8 years at sites which are served by Wheathill Lane, though the lane itself is rural in character and of limited capacity. Option 1 would introduce additional traffic to Wheathill Lane, all of which would flow through the centre of the settlement to access the A30. Option 1 could therefore potentially introduce or exacerbate issues associated with queuing traffic at busy times of day.</p> <p>In terms of sustainable transport options, Milton Port does not have its own railway station and neither option presents notably greater direct access to stations at nearby settlements. However, Option 2 would direct growth to the south west of the settlement which is served by existing hourly bus services to Yeovil via the A30. There could be potential to provide direct pedestrian access from development under Option 2 to the existing bus stops. Option 1 would direct growth to locations which are further from the A30 bus stops, though likely still within reasonable walking distance.</p> <p>There is limited cycling and walking infrastructure within Milton Port or which directly connects the settlement to nearby services and facilities. Development under either option could potentially include walking and cycling paths to the local services at the village centre, though would be unlikely to contribute more strategic walking and cycling infrastructure.</p>	

SA Theme: Energy and Climate Change		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>It is not possible to differentiate between the two options in terms of energy consumption or efficiency. Both options are assumed to have the same development potential and therefore the same level of opportunities to seek energy efficiency through measures such as design and materials.</p> <p>Both options are considered likely to have a similar degree of car dependency given the need to access higher tier services and employment at other settlements. The small scale of the settlement and its relative distance from other service centres is considered to mean that opportunities to improve green infrastructure networks to support a modal shift away from car dependency.</p>	

SA Theme: Water Resources, Quality and Flooding		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	2	1
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>It is not possible to differentiate between the two options in terms of water resources and water quality as the limited scale of development potential at Milborne Port means neither option is considered likely to result in either positive or negative effects.</p> <p>In terms of flooding, both sites are unaffected by fluvial flood risk and perform on a par in this respect. However, there are areas of surface water flood risk at each option. Option 1 would direct some development towards land at site E/MIPO/0014 which contains a large linear band of surface water flood risk at the centre. Although the risk is low (i.e. between 0.1% and 1% chance of flooding in any given year) the risk area is extensive and occupies the eastern half of the site. This could be mitigated through design and layout but it would likely limit the development potential under Option 1. Option 2 contains a more limited area of low surface water flood risk which would likely be simply to incorporate into the design of any future scheme without impacting the capacity of the site.</p> <p>On the basis that the development potential of Option 1 has greater likelihood of being affected by surface water flood risk it is considered that on balance Option 2 performs more strongly in relation to the Water Resources, Quality and Flooding SA theme.</p>	

SA Theme: Soil and Land		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>Detailed agricultural land quality surveys have been undertaken around the full circumference of Milbourne Port, including at each of the two options. The area containing Option 2 was found to be entirely Grade 3a, whilst the area containing Option 1 was found to be at a transition between Grade 3a and 3b. It follows that development under either option would necessitate the loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land, though in the case of Option 1 this may only be partial loss. Both options comprise entirely greenfield sites and consequently it is not possible to differentiate between them in terms of promoting the use of previously developed land.</p> <p>On balance it is considered that the two options perform broadly on a par as the area of Option 1 which may be poorer quality than Grade 3a is only a small proportion of the overall option and development under either option would necessitate the loss of high quality agricultural land.</p>	

SA Theme: Biodiversity and Geodiversity		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No
Discussion	<p>Milborne Port is not notably sensitive in biodiversity terms and there are no nationally or internationally designated sites or habitats likely to be directly affected development. A number of Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) are present around the periphery of the village, particularly the Vartenham Hill LWS to the west and a linear chain comprising four LWS at the east of the village. However, neither option is considered likely to put these sites under notable pressure either in terms of direct impact from the development process or from subsequent recreational pressure.</p> <p>In this context it is considered not possible to differentiate between the options with regard to biodiversity and that they both perform on a par.</p>	

SA Theme: Landscape and Townscape		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>The Milborne Port Peripheral Landscape Study (2008) finds that much of the landscape around the village has 'moderate to low' or 'low' capacity for growth, reflecting the landscape sensitivity of the village and its rural setting. The exception to this is Site E/MIPO/0015 in the north of the village which is the only site found to have high landscape capacity. However, as the site comes forward under either option this does not help to differentiate between them.</p> <p>Option 2 directs growth to the south and west of the village towards sites which overwhelmingly have a landscape capacity of either 'moderate to low' or 'low'. This suggests the development potential at these locations is limited by their landscape sensitivity. By extension, the openness of the sites under Option 2 can be inferred as making a contribution to the distinctive rural setting and character of the village, including by preserving views in and out of the historic core of the village (as noted in relation to the Historic Environment theme).</p> <p>By contrast, Option 1 includes Site E/MIPO/0023 which projects into the centre of the village and consequently has a less peripheral character and less exposure within the landscape. Consequently the Peripheral Landscape Study finds that this site is of 'moderate' and 'moderate to high' landscape capacity. This suggests that in landscape terms, development under Option 1 would have a more limited effect on the setting and character of the village as development would be focussed towards the village centre rather than increasing the level of land take at the village periphery.</p> <p>On balance, it is therefore considered that Option 2 performs most strongly in relation to the Landscape and Townscape SA theme.</p>	

SA Theme: Historic Environment		
Options	1. Further growth to the East (E/MIPO/0014 and E/MIPO/0023) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)	2. Further growth to the South West (E/MIPO/0008 and E/MIPO/0003) including some growth in the north (E/MIPO/0015)
Rank	1	2
Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>Milborne Port has a number of individual designated historic assets, particularly associated with its historic core along the alignment of Sherborne Road. Notably, this includes a cluster of eight Grade I listed buildings and structures at Ven House at the east of the village and the Grade I listed Church of St John the Evangelist at the south of the village. The village has two conservation areas, one associated with the historic centre and a smaller additional conservation area covering the New Town development at the village's north west.</p> <p>In this context, Option 2 gives rise to greater potential for effects on the historic environment, potentially including significant effects. The option directs some growth to the village's south west, including a site which is adjacent to the Milborne Port conservation area and a second site which is partially within the conservation area. In practice, the adjacent site is severed from the conservation area by the A30 and development would have limited potential to directly impact its setting or character. However, the site which partially intersects with the conservation area sits slightly higher in the landscape than the built area of the village, giving it potential to affect views into and out of the historic core of the village and thereby impact the historic setting and character of the conservation area.</p> <p>By contrast, Option 1 directs growth to the north of the village away from either conservation area and with limited direct effect on listed structures. The Grade II listed Old Angel Inn on Station Road could potentially have its setting affected if development were to come forward on what is currently an open field to its east, but this could likely be mitigated through sensitive design and layout.</p> <p>Whilst it is also important to recognise the potential for non-listed or designated historic assets to contribute to an overall historic character and that many non-designated buildings in the village contribute to the street scene it is considered that Option 1 has limited potential for such effects. This is in the context of much of the existing adjacent development to Site E/MIPO/023, particularly along Wheathill Lane, being of mid-20th century character of little historic interest.</p>	

South Petherton

Spatial portrait

South Petherton is a large, attractive hamstone village in central South Somerset. It lies immediately to the north of the busy A303 road corridor amongst the shallow folds of low limestone hills, some 7 miles west of Yeovil. The settlement is surrounded by gradual, undulating hills that are regarded as having high landscape value, especially to the west, north and east; the settlement is surrounded by Best and Most Versatile agricultural land. A small stream flows north through the centre of South Petherton before it feeds into the wider River Parrett further along its course. The land either side of the stream has been identified as part of the functional flood plain.

There are a large number of listed buildings concentrated in the historic core that are incorporated within the Conservation Area.

The population of the settlement is 3,616 with a higher than average percentage of people over 65 years (28%). The village has a variety of services, however self-containment is an issue. Only just over half of the population is of working age, but of those who do work, the travel to work data shows that over 80% out commute to a variety of other locations.

Site options

The summary findings of the HELAA work are presented in Figure below. The reason why a site is not considered suitable, available or achievable is provided within the HELAA. All of the site options considered through the HELAA have been appraised through the SA process, please refer to Appendix III.

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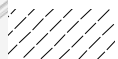






SSDC

SSDC

SSDC

South Somerset HELAA 2018 South Petherton

-  Suitable, Available and Achievable
-  Housing
-  Employment
-  Mixed Use
-  Parish Boundary

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N/SOPE/0013

N/SOPE/0015

N/SOPE/0016

N/SOPE/0012

N/SOPE/0008

N/SOPE/0006/A

N/SOPE/0001/10

**Note: The HELAA does not allocate sites for development
nor does it imply that identified sites would be granted
planning permission if an application were to be submitted.**

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4 Kilometers

Identifying options

The number of completions and commitments in South Petherton as at 31st March 2018 is 61 dwellings. The HELAA identified three sites as being suitable, available and achievable, which are spread around the edges of the settlement. N/SOPE/0016 was granted outline planning permission (17/02709/OUT) for residential development on part of site.

The South Petherton Neighbourhood Area designation was approved by the District Council in April 2015. Since then, the Neighbourhood Plan for the area was prepared. The Plan was then the subject of independent examination and following a referendum where the vote was in favour, the Neighbourhood Plan went on to be 'made' in September 2018. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any sites for development.

The HELAA findings demonstrate that there are limited opportunities for further growth at South Petherton. It is therefore not considered necessary to undertake a formal appraisal of options for South Petherton. Different levels of growth at the settlement can be explored and appraised through the development of District-wide spatial strategy options based on the sites identified in the HELAA.

Appendix V: SA of Reasonable Alternatives

Introduction

As explained within 'Part 1' in the main report (Chapters 4 to 8), a focus of work has been on the development and appraisal of district-wide spatial strategy alternatives, with a view to informing determination of the preferred strategy. In summary, the reasonable alternatives are set out in Table VI below.

Table VI: The reasonable spatial strategy alternatives

	Option 1: Preferred Option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Completions	1,179	1,179	1,179	1,179
Permissions	5,813	5,813	5,813	5,813
Total	6,992	6,992	6,992	6,992
Yeovil existing SUEs	1,565	1,565	1,565	1,565
Yeovil Town Centre	400	400	600	400
Yeovil other sites	922	461	1,152	461
Yeovil Total	2,887	2,426	3,317	2,426
Chard	1,490	1,342	1,490	1,342
Crewkerne	480	110	642	110
Ilminster	720	720	877	400
Wincanton	220	440	440	110
Primary Market Towns Total	2,910	2,612	3,449	1,962
Ansford and Castle Cary	161	80	394	80
Langport and Huish Episcopi	180	196	196	80
Somerton	140	70	360	70
Local Market Towns Total	481	346	950	230
Bruton	65	65	5	207
Ilchester	200	100	100	900
Martock and Bower Hinton	210	210	105	440
Milborne Port	140	304	65	304
South Petherton	55	112	10	112
Local Market Towns Total	670	791	285	1,963
Villages Total	722	1,070	361	1,070
Rural Settlements Total	876	976	488	976
Total number of dwellings	15,538	15,213	15,842	15,619
% over OAN (14,322)	8%	6%	11%	9%

Appraisal methodology

For each of the options, the assessment examines **likely significant effects** on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability objectives identified through scoping (see Table 3.1 in the main report) as a methodological framework. **Green** is used to indicate significant positive effects, whilst **red** is used to indicate significant negative effects. If no colour is used then no residual significant effects are predicted.

Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the policy approaches under consideration. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a 'no plan' scenario). In light of this, there is a need to make considerable assumptions regarding how scenarios will be implemented 'on the ground' and what the effect on particular receptors would be. Where there is a need to rely on assumptions in order to reach a conclusion on a 'significant effect' this is made explicit in the appraisal text.

Where it is not possible to predict likely significant effects on the basis of reasonable assumptions, efforts are made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a **rank of preference**. The number indicates the rank and does not have any bearing on likely significant effects. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in terms of 'significant effects'.

Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking into account the criteria presented within Regulations.¹²² So, for example, account is taken of the duration, frequency and reversibility of effects. Cumulative effects are also considered (i.e. where the effects of the plan in combination with the effects of other planned or on-going activity that is outside the control of the South Somerset District Local Plan Review).

¹²² Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Appraisal findings

A comparative appraisal of the options was carried out under each SA Objective. The findings are presented in the tables below.

SA Theme: Communities				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	1	3	2	4
Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
Discussion	<p>All options perform equally in terms of providing sufficient housing to meet the identified housing needs of the district, as it is assumed that all options could deliver the same quantum of growth. Long term significant positive effects are therefore predicted in this respect.</p> <p>In terms of addressing the wider needs of communities, options which direct growth to deprived areas are anticipated to lead to long-term positive effects. In this context, it is recognised that of the 103 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) identified within the district, two fall within the 10% most deprived in the country, and five fall within the 20% most deprived in the country. The seven LSOAs that are the most deprived are located in Yeovil, and as such, Option 3, followed by Option 1 perform most positively against communities, as they will be delivering a high level of growth (housing, employment and infrastructure) in the most deprived areas of the district. Options 2 and 4 perform least well in this regard as these options direct less growth to Yeovil. Options 1 and 3 are also considered to lead to positive effects through directing growth to the most sustainable settlements, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy. Yeovil is the focus for employment, retail, services and housing in South Somerset, and is highly self-sufficient. Similarly, the Market Towns (where growth is also focussed) are also well serviced, with good transport connections, and able to support housing. The delivery of Options 1 and 3 will therefore lead to positive effects in terms of supporting new and existing residents, contributing towards the prosperity of the high order settlements; recognising their role and function as District Centre and Primary Market Towns.</p> <p>Conversely, following a market led approach (Option 2) and directing less growth in the high order settlements (Option 4) would include an increased level of development in the Villages and Rural Settlements where community infrastructure is deficient, and residents are out-commuting for employment and day to day services/ facilities. While it is noted that Option 2 maintains a high level of growth in Wincanton (a Primary Market Town), Option 4 in particular would likely result in negative effects on community cohesion and neighbourhood satisfaction in rural locations. This may also negatively impact on more vulnerable groups that are less mobile, such as the elderly, who will need to travel further afield to access services/ facilities.</p> <p>Evidence suggests (Annual Monitoring Report and Five-year Housing Land Supply Paper) that the market has not been delivering as many new homes in Yeovil, Chard, Crewkerne, Ansford & Castle Cary, Somerton and Ilchester as was predicted. This is largely due to the fact that large urban extensions take longer to masterplan and advance through the planning application process resulting in delays in delivery. In comparison, Wincanton, Langport/ Huish Episcopi, Milborne Port, South Petherton and in particular the rural settlements have been delivering a greater number of new homes than predicted. It is important to note that all of the options include these large scale developments as they are allocated within the adopted Local Plan and the Council is committed to their delivery. While it could be argued that Option 2 involves less risk compared to other options in terms of delivery, given that it directs to where the market has been delivering, there is also the potential that additional growth focussed in these areas could saturate the market. Furthermore, the proposals for large scale growth proposed in Yeovil, Chard and Crewkerne are now further progressed.</p> <p>Directing additional growth at the lower order settlements under Option 2 and Option 4 could substantially affect the character of the smaller rural settlements, altering existing settlement patterns, leading to loss of community and settlement identity.</p> <p>While all Options perform similarly in terms of the overall quantum of housing to meet the needs of the district, Option 1 is considered to perform best as it distributes housing in line with the settlement hierarchy and should help to meet the needs of all communities. Option 2 also</p>			

	performs well as it focuses growth at the higher order settlements; however, this could mean that the needs of the smaller rural settlements are less likely to be met. These Options are likely to lead to positive effects on local communities through targeting growth at deprived areas. Options 3 and 4 focus a greater proportion of growth at the lower order settlements, which would help to meet the needs of rural communities but could affect the identity of these settlements as well as have impacts on more vulnerable members of the community who are less able to access necessary services/ facilities.
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SA Theme: Economy and Employment				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	2	3	1	3
Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>It is considered that all of the options could deliver employment land as part of mixed use development, leading to long term positive effects. Option 1, and in particular Option 3 are more likely to support the vitality of existing town centres as additional growth is focussed at the higher order settlements. Notably Option 3 is more likely to support and maintain the long-term function of Yeovil, Crewkerne, Ilminster, and Wincanton Town Centres, given density is increased at these locations. Options 1 and 3 will likely provide for a wide range of local jobs within easy commuting distance from homes, supporting existing high levels of self-containment seen in the high order settlements (notably Yeovil, being the district Centre). Options 1 and 3 also utilise development opportunities in settlements which are served by railway stations; Option 3 in this respect directs a higher level of growth to Yeovil and Crewkerne which include three of the seven railway stations in the district. Notably, the West of England line (which serves Crewkerne and Yeovil Junction) and has an hourly service to Exeter and London Waterloo.</p> <p>Option 1 also directs a considerable level of growth to these settlements (in accordance with the settlement hierarchy), and it is therefore considered that Option 3 and Option 1 will lead to positive effects through providing sustainable access to employment in key employment locations outside of the district. It is however considered that there is a high reliance on the car for travel throughout the district, and this is likely to continue. In this context it is recognised that in-commuting is high to Yeovil, taking place predominately via the A303 corridor. The A303 provides a strong 'east-west' axis thorough the district, facilitating business connectivity as well as easy access to markets, labour, goods and materials. The A303 would be utilised through all options, particularly Options 2 (given the higher level growth proposed at Wincanton and South Petherton which are located along the A303 corridor) and Option 4 (given the higher level growth proposed at South Petherton, Stoke Sub Hamdon, and Ilchester, which are located along the A303 corridor). Positive effects are therefore anticipated in terms of providing the lower order settlements connectivity with employment centres.</p> <p>Option 1 directs a proportion of growth to the towns (11%) and villages (8%), which will help to support the vitality of existing centres, encouraging sustainable growth in accordance with the settlement hierarchy. Option 4 promotes higher growth in the lower order settlements, which may be less likely to support the economic vitality and viability of the settlements compared to Option 1 and 3, with residents likely to out-commute to the wider South West. Lower levels of growth in the higher order settlements is also proposed through Option 2 (directing growth away from Yeovil, Chard, and Crewkerne is also proposed through Option 2), following a market led approach. However, given forthcoming infrastructure delivery, it is considered that in terms of economic development the most sustainable location for growth is within Yeovil; recognising its role as a District Centre, and the prime economic driver for South Somerset.¹²³ As such, it is considered that Options 3 and 1 are preferred in terms of this SA Objective compared to Option 2 and Option 4.</p>			

¹²³ Lichfields (2017) South Somerset Retail and Main Town Centres Uses Study Final Report

SA Theme: Health and Equalities				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	1	3	2	4
Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>In terms of improving health and wellbeing of residents and reducing inequalities, key issues relate to the need to address any areas of rural deprivation, plan for the needs of an ageing population, protecting and enhancing important green assets, and ensure that new and existing communities have adequate access to community infrastructure, including health and recreation facilities.</p> <p>Option 1 seeks to reduce inequalities between rural and urban areas through supporting and sustaining a hierarchy of vibrant town centres across the district. In this context, Primary Market Towns are the focal points for locally significant development (outside of Yeovil), which will likely lead to positive effects in terms of increasing the self-containment of these settlements and enhancing their service roles. Improved levels of self-containment is also anticipated through the delivery of Option 3, which increases density at the higher level order settlements where there is sustainable access to a range of community services and facilities, including health, leisure and recreation. Notably, Yeovil contains six GP surgeries, and therefore directing a high level of growth to the District Centre through Option 1 and Option 3 is preferred; leading to long term positive effects against this SA theme.</p> <p>Option 2 and Option 4 seek to increase focus on the lower order settlements, which would likely result in development in locations where health services are deficient, and where there is limited access to sustainable transport modes. Less growth at Yeovil and the Primary Market Towns would however likely reduce pressure on health facilities in the key settlements; although pressure would be increased in locations where there is less likely to be capacity. For example GP surgeries are less likely to be taking on new patients in the Rural Settlements than the Market Towns.</p> <p>It is considered that under Option 2 and Option 4, residents would likely be reliant on the car for access to health, leisure and wider community services and facilities, having a negative effect on overall wellbeing. In this context, it is recognised that bus service coverage is poor reflecting the rural nature of the district, and services are infrequent except in the largest settlements. It is noted that in addition to lower order settlements, Option 2 also increases growth at Wincanton, a Primary Market Town. As such, it is considered that Option 2 is likely to perform more positively than Option 4 against this SA theme, given Wincanton is identified as a sustainable location for growth with a range of services and facilities to meet local needs.</p> <p>All options provide a significant opportunity to deliver improvements to social/ community infrastructure. The level of infrastructure delivery is expected to be similar under all options, and therefore a best performing option cannot be identified in this respect. All options also provide an opportunity to deliver new and improved areas of multi-functional Green Infrastructure alongside development, aiding ecological connectivity throughout the district. This will lead to long term positive effects against this SA Objective under all options. Option 1, followed by 3 are preferred in terms of this SA Objective compared to Option 2, followed by Option 4.</p>			

SA Theme: Transport and Movement				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	2	3	1	4
Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>Existing travel patterns in South Somerset reflect its rural nature, with reliance on the car for many journeys. Directing growth to the higher order settlements (Options 1 and 3) is considered to lead to long term positive effects on this SA theme, as it will ensure that new residents have good access to existing services/ facilities and employment, as well as sustainable transport. This will help to encourage a modal shift and reduce reliance on the private vehicle. In this context it is noted that Yeovil's two railway stations are located on the periphery of the settlement which presents a challenge in terms of accessibility. However, there is a regular bus service from the two railway stations to the town centre, and specifically, Pen Mill railway station has good pedestrian and cycle links to the town centre via an off road path. Therefore, increasing the density of town centre, and other, sites within Yeovil (Option 3) is anticipated to lead to positive effects in terms of access to sustainable travel.</p> <p>While there are sustainable transport options available in Yeovil and the Market Towns, there remains a heavy reliance on the car for journeys to work and services. Congestion is notably an issue of concern in Yeovil (given the Air Quality Management Area [AQMA] present) and Crewkerne, where a large proportion of growth through Option 1 and 3 is targeted.¹²⁴ This presents a challenge for development, as there is significant risk that this trend would be intensified.</p> <p>Options 2 and 4 propose more growth in the Local Market Towns, Rural Centres, and Villages, which is less likely to encourage the use of public transport as it does not take advantage of existing larger Primary Market Towns (with the exception of Wincanton under Option 2). Sustainable transport is less accessible in rural locations, and therefore residents are expected to utilise the A303 corridor where possible.</p> <p>It is considered that directing growth away from the higher order settlements through Options 2 and 4 may help to reduce the potential air quality and traffic concerns at Yeovil and Chard as discussed above. However, the lower order settlements contain limited employment with restricted access to services/ facilities and sustainable transport. As a result, it is assumed that the majority of new residents would need to travel by car to access a wider range of services/ facilities and employment in the higher order settlements, increasing levels of congestion on the strategic road network and across the district. This may also result in increased levels of in-commuting to Yeovil which would exacerbate local air quality issues in the District Centre rather than deliver improvements in this respect. Improvements to air quality in Yeovil are likely to be best achieved through better-quality sustainable transport networks in the town, reducing the reliance on the car as the primary mode of travel. Options 3 and 1 have the greatest potential to deliver necessary improvements in this respect, given the higher level of growth proposed at Yeovil.</p> <p>It is however recognised that all options have the potential to include enhancements/ improvements to services/ facilities and public transport. As set out above, the level of infrastructure delivery is expected to be equal under all options.</p>			

¹²⁴ Somerset County Council (2006) Yeovil Transport Strategy Review

SA Theme: Energy and Climate Change				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	2	3	1	4
Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>Development proposed under any of the options has the potential to incorporate renewable or low carbon energy. As a similar level of growth is proposed under each option, all options are anticipated to perform equally in terms of supporting renewable energy and increased energy efficiency.</p> <p>As discussed under the 'Transport and Movement SA Theme' it is considered that Option 1 and Option 3 will direct growth to the higher order settlements where there are high levels of self-containment; given residents have good access to sustainable transport and local services/ facilities. This will help to encourage a modal shift and reduce reliance on the private vehicle, having a positive effect on climate change mitigation.</p> <p>Option 4 and to a lesser extent, Option 2, perform less well in this respect as these options direct a high proportion of growth to the lower order settlements where there is a limited range of services/ facilities on offer, and poor access to sustainable transport modes. As a result, it is likely that new residents will need to travel by car to access a wider range of services/ facilities at Yeovil and the Primary Market Towns. It is however noted that Option 2 increases growth at Wincanton which is a sustainable location for growth within the district's Settlement Hierarchy.¹²⁵</p> <p>All options present an opportunity to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change through providing improvements to the local green infrastructure network. It is considered that all options are able to deliver a similar level of infrastructure, and as such all options perform equally in this respect.</p>			

¹²⁵ Baker Associates (April 2009) South Somerset Settlement Role and Function Study

SA Theme: Water Resources, Quality and Flooding				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	=	=	=	=
Significant effect?	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain	Uncertain
Discussion	<p>To better understand flood risk in South Somerset, the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) (2008) provides a preliminary review of the 13 settlements identified as potential sites for future development within the district. It is apparent from the SFRA findings that eight of the growth areas intersect with Flood Zone 3, with the potential for long term negative effects (although in many cases the area affected is small). In terms of the higher order settlements, Yeovil and Wincanton are identified as locations where the urban area intersect with Flood Zone 3.</p> <p>The majority of the Rural Centres are also identified as high fluvial flood risk areas, and as such all options have the potential to lead to long term negative effects in this respect. It is noted that Yeovil is specifically constrained within the town centre and along the east and south of the settlement. As such, increasing density at Town Centre sites through Option 3 may limit opportunities to avoid the highest flood risk areas and implement suitable mitigation. Conversely, where options seek to deliver lower growth at Yeovil sites (Options 2 and 4), this may increase the opportunity for mitigation where necessary, ensuring that development does not increase flood risk elsewhere. This may also be the case for Wincanton and Langport and Huish Episcopi, where negative effects may result from the increased density at sites proposed through Option 2 and 3, and positive effects may result from reduced density proposed through Option 4. Overall, it is considered that the nature and significance of effects will be dependent on the precise location of growth and mitigation delivered at the project level.</p> <p>In terms of surface water flooding, there are existing issues at most of the main settlements throughout the district, notably at Yeovil and Ilminster. It is recognised that the SFRA (2008) considers that through close collaboration with Wessex Water and/or South West Water (as applicable), South Somerset District Council can ensure all future development is sustainable in relation to surface water and sewer flooding. In this context, and given all options direct a level of growth at the higher order settlements (notably options 1 and 3), a surface water feasibility study for Ilminster is currently programmed (2018/19), and development in Yeovil will be informed by the Yeovil Surface Water Management Plan (2019).¹²⁶ As such, residual effects are anticipated to be neutral in this respect.</p> <p>Overall, it is difficult to identify any significant differences between the options in terms of water resources, quality and flooding. Development coming forward under any of the options would be directed towards areas of lower flood risk as per the sequential test and could also incorporate sustainable drainage systems as recommended through the SFRA (2008).</p>			

¹²⁶ Surface Water Management Plan for Yeovil 2019-2020

SA Theme: Soil and Land				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	=	=	=	=
Significant effect?	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>South Somerset is significantly constrained by best and most versatile (BMV) land, with the majority of BMV land located to the south of the district. Specifically, Grade 1 agricultural land is located east of Ilminster, north of Crewkerne, south and west of South Petherton, and there is another significant area wrapping around the southern edge of Yeovil.</p> <p>All options are likely to result in the loss of some areas of BMV agricultural land (Grade 1 to 3a), leading to significant long term negative effects against this SA theme. Where growth is focused around urban centres under Option 1 and Option 3, this loss may be less significant; particularly through Option 3 where density is increased at urban town centre sites in Yeovil. However, it is recognised that outside of the urban centre of Yeovil there are significant areas of Grade 1 and Grade 2 agricultural land which potentially may be lost. This predominately relates to the Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUEs) proposed under all options, and therefore all options will lead to long term significant negative effects. However, as the delivery of the SUEs is constant for all options, options cannot be differentiated against in this respect. Lower growth at Yeovil's 'Other sites' however (Option 2 and Option 4) may lead to reduced adverse effects compared to other options, as Option 2 and Option 4 seek to reduce the delivery of growth on these sites by half. This presents an opportunity to avoid highest quality agricultural land where possible, further reducing the potential for significant adverse effects. Conversely, increased density at 'Yeovil other options' through Option 3 will likely lead to greater negative effects than other options through reducing the opportunity for sufficient mitigation/avoidance of areas of highest quality land.</p> <p>Option 4 will result in the loss of more agricultural land around Local Market Towns and Rural Centres, but could also help to reduce the loss of high grade agricultural land around Yeovil and Market Towns. While this is also considered the case through the delivery of Option 2 to some extent, it is recognised that Option 2 directs a high level of growth to Wincanton, of which the periphery of the existing settlement is constrained entirely by BMV land. Focussing growth at Wincanton through Option 2 (and to a lesser extent Option 1) is therefore anticipated to lead to negative effects against this SA theme through the likely loss of this resource.</p> <p>Directing an increased level of growth at Villages and Rural Settlements through Option 4 and Option 2 will likely result in the loss of a higher quantity of agricultural land, given the rural nature of the settlements and limited brownfield land available at these locations. However as set out above, the highest quality land is located predominately around the higher order settlements, and as such agricultural land lost through increased growth at the Villages and Rural Settlements would likely be of lower quality. Nonetheless, the loss of BMV agricultural land in any capacity will lead to long term negative effects.</p> <p>Overall, all of the options propose a similar level of growth and given the prevalence of BMV agricultural land throughout the district, all options are anticipated to lead to significant long term negative effects and there is little to differentiate them at a district level. It is noted that Option 3 proposes increased densities on town centre sites in Yeovil which could reduce the amount of greenfield and agricultural land in the district; however, it is not significant enough to differentiate between the options.</p>			

SA Theme: Biodiversity and Geodiversity				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	=	=	=	=
Significant effect?	No	No	No	No
Discussion	<p>In terms of internationally designated biodiversity sites, it is recognised that parts of the Somerset Levels and Moors Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar Site and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are dispersed throughout the district. The SPA and Ramsar site is a wetland habitat attracting extensive bird populations, notably located along the district boundary to the west, and just south of Langport. In terms of nationally designated sites in the district, there are four National Nature Reserves (NNRs) and 39 further SSSIs. These are located predominately along the district boundaries with some smaller SSSIs closer to settlements such as Chard and Crewkerne.</p> <p>At the local level there are nearly 600 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and five Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) spread across the district, as well as occurrences of protected species and an abundance of habitats and species of 'principal importance'. There are hotspots of LWSs around the district's boundaries, with some larger sites located centrally, such as King's Moor LWS to the west of Ilchester and Hay Moor LWS south of Langport.</p> <p>The higher tier settlements, Yeovil and Primary Market Towns, within Option 3 and Option 1 are not significantly constrained by biodiversity, being located in urban locations where biodiversity value is medium-low. Notably, Yeovil contains limited designated biodiversity areas, and it is recognised that Option 3 performs well through increasing density on the Yeovil Town Centre sites, which do not contain and are not located near to any designated biodiversity sites or important habitats. In addition to avoiding adverse effects on biodiversity, it is recognised that Yeovil Town Centre sites present an opportunity for delivering positive effects through biodiversity net gain; including habitat enhancements and improved connectivity. There is therefore potential for positive effects to be delivered in the long-term through Option 3, and to a lesser extent Option 1.</p> <p>However, it is noted that Yeovil is largely surrounded in the south and west by designated LWS and priority habitats are dispersed through the surrounding countryside. Minor adverse effects are anticipated in relation to the delivery of the SUEs (notably the Southern SUE given the priority woodland present on site and adjacent LWS). Given the delivery of the SUEs are constant through all options, all options perform equally in this respect.</p> <p>The potential for positive effects through the delivery of biodiversity net-gain are also anticipated for Chard, a Primary Market Town allocated the second highest level of growth. Development proposed at this settlement encircles the main town centre area and presents significant opportunities for habitat enhancements and enhanced ecological connectivity between the main LWS adjoining the development sites (Chard Reservoir and Chard Railway Fields Complex). However, it is also recognised that of the Primary Market Towns, only Chard is within relatively close proximity to a nationally designated site, having Snowdon Hill Quarry SSSI to the west of the settlement boundary, and Woolhayes Farm SSSI located at Pudleigh to the north west of the settlement boundary. Snowdon Hill Quarry is of great importance because of the rock exposures which it provides, while Woodhayes Farm SSSI contains rare swamp, mire and grassland habitats. Directing high levels of growth to Chard through Option 1 and Option 3 has the potential adversely impact on these designated sites. Similarly for Option 1 and Option 3, increased development within Crewkerne is anticipated to lead to minor long-term negative effects for Kithill LWS as the proposed development sites largely enclose the LWS on three sides. It is however considered that there is the potential for sufficient mitigation to reduce the extent of the potential effects at designated sites within the Primary Market Towns.</p> <p>Moving down the settlement hierarchy, options which direct growth to Local Market Town Langport (Option 2, Option 3 and to a lesser extent Option 1) have the potential to result in increased recreational pressure on the internationally designated Somerset Levels and Moors. Langport and Huish Episcopi are the most constrained settlements in terms of the Somerset Levels and Moors, being located approximately 1km north west of the designated site.</p>			

	<p>Adverse effects are anticipated through public access/disturbance, which is identified within the Site Improvement Plan as a key pressure due to the potential harm to wintering birds.¹²⁷ Mitigation, particularly during construction would be required at this location to reduce the extent of the potential effects. Langport is also constrained by LWSs within and adjacent to the settlement boundary. Option 4 is best performing in this respect as it reduces growth at Langport. A number of other Market Towns are also constrained in terms of biodiversity sites; however, these are by locally designated sites and therefore residual effects through are less likely to be significant.</p> <p>There are a number of smaller rural settlements located in close proximity to nationally and locally designated sites, outside of the Market Towns. Option 4 and Option 2 which direct a higher level of growth to these areas than other options are therefore more likely to have an impact on these sites, with the potential for residual adverse effects. In this context, Bruton Railway Cutting SSSI, designated for its geological features, is within 150m of a proposed site for growth within the settlement. However, it is also recognised that in terms of the Rural Centres and Villages, with the exception of the sites at North Cadbury, none of these development locations contain or are near to any designated biodiversity or priority habitat. As such, where higher growth is proposed at these settlements (Option 2 and Option 4) significant effects are not anticipated.</p> <p>In addition to designated sites, all options have the potential to result in adverse effects on biodiversity through loss of greenfield land and priority habitats, such as hedgerows and traditional orchards. In this context, due to the high level of housing to be delivered in rural locations, effects are likely to be of greater significance under Growth Options 4 and 2. All options however also have the potential to deliver mitigation and/or biodiversity offsetting alongside development. This may also include biodiversity net-gain, leading to positive effects through the creation of new habitats and improved connectivity throughout the area. This is uncertain at this stage.</p> <p>Overall, the focus of growth at Yeovil and the Primary Market Towns under Option 1 and Option 3 is likely to have limited adverse effect on biodiversity due to concentrating growth in urban built-up locations around the existing main settlements where internationally/nationally designated biodiversity sites are relatively sparse. However, a number of the lower order settlements are also not constrained at a national/international level, and therefore impacts on biodiversity may not be significantly greater. Directing growth to the lower order settlements through Option 4 and Option 2 is however likely to perform poorly due to increased loss of greenfield land, and possible loss of/damage to locally designated sites and Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitats. While loss of greenfield land is expected under Options 1 and 3, increased density at higher order settlements will result in less greenfield land lost due to utilisation of brownfield sites; with significant positive effects under Option 3 in this respect. However, it is recognised that Option 4 performs well through reducing the level of growth at Langport, minimising adverse effects on the Somerset Levels and Moors SPA/ Ramsar Site.</p> <p>It is also recognised that all options have the potential to deliver positive effects on biodiversity through enhancement measures secured at the site level. This is currently uncertain, and therefore at the district scale it is difficult to differentiate between the options. Ultimately the nature and significance of effects will be dependent on the precise location of development, established at the detailed design stage.</p>
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¹²⁷ Natural England (2014) Site Improvement Plan: Somerset Levels and Moors [online] available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6561001356918784>

SA Theme: Landscape and Townscape				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	1	3	2	3
Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>Given the rural nature of the district, it is considered that all options have the potential to lead to significant long term negative effects on the landscape through the loss of greenfield sites on the edge of settlements.</p> <p>In terms of promoting the use of brownfield land, it is recognised that while opportunities are limited throughout the district, Option 3 proposes the greatest level of growth on previously developed land through increased densities on town centre sites in Yeovil. While this could help to reduce impacts on the rural character of the district there is the potential it could have negative effects on townscape, e.g. as a result of higher buildings to accommodate increased densities.</p> <p>Taking into consideration the findings of the Peripheral Landscape Study (2008), at a district scale it appears that limited areas within the district have been identified as having high capacity to accommodate development. Notably, areas surrounding Chard and west of Ilminster are identified as higher capacity, in addition to smaller pockets at the settlement edges. Most of the land along the periphery of settlements however has been found overall to have a medium-low and low capacity for development, with significant areas of low and medium-low capacity for development located at Yeovil, all Primary Market Towns, Local Market Towns and Rural Centres Bruton and Ilchester. Given the extent of settlements significantly constrained in terms of landscape capacity, it is considered that all options have the potential to lead to long term negative effects on the landscape and townscape in these areas.</p> <p>In terms of differentiating between the options, it could be argued that Option 1 and Option 3 will lead to greater adverse effects through delivering a higher level of growth at settlements constrained entirely by land with low and low-medium capacity for growth. However, Option 2 and Option 4 direct growth to the villages and rural settlements which, although have not been included within the Peripheral Landscape Study (2008), are assumed to be constrained in landscape terms given the rural nature of the district and sensitivity of the wider landscape. Additional growth proposed at the lower tier settlements is therefore likely to lead to significant negative effects on the surrounding landscape and character of these settlements.</p> <p>Overall, Option 1 is best performing as it predominately directs growth to areas identified as having high or moderate capacity to accommodate development. While there are a few exceptions to this, this only reflects the sensitivity of the districts' landscape as a whole, and the limited high/moderate capacity areas to accommodate the quantum of growth required to meet the district's needs. It is the least likely to result in a significant negative residual effect on the landscape. Options 2 and 4 perform more poorly as the increased levels of growth at lower order settlements will require development in areas of higher landscape sensitivity. They are also more likely to have negative effects on the wider rural character of the district by focussing additional growth at the smaller and more rural settlements. While Option 3 directs development away from the more rural settlements, the increased growth at the higher order settlements will mean that growth will occur in areas that are sensitive in landscape terms. It is considered that the significance of effects will ultimately be dependent on the exact location, design/ layout of development as well as the implementation of mitigation measures.</p>			

SA Theme: Historic Environment				
Option	Option 1: Preferred option	Option 2: Market led	Option 3: More growth in the higher order settlements	Option 4: More growth in the lower order settlements
Rank	1	3	2	3
Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
Discussion	<p>There are a range of nationally designated heritage assets within the district, including over 80 Conservation Areas, 14 Historic Parks and Gardens, one Registered Battlefield, 70 Scheduled Monuments, and over 4,600 Listed Building Entries (97 Grade I Listed). There are also 28 records on Historic England's "Heritage at Risk Register", which includes 15 churches and religious premises, a series of former industrial sites, and domestic properties.</p> <p>Given the volume of heritage assets located throughout the district, it is considered that all of the options will result in localised impacts on the historic environment depending on where the additional growth is directed. Option 2 and Option 4 have the potential to lead to adverse effects of reduced significance considering the dispersed nature of development throughout the settlements compared to Option 1 and Option 3. Option 1 directs a third of growth to Yeovil, and this level is further increased through Option 3 which increases the density of Yeovil Town Centre and other sites around the fringes of the settlement. Yeovil and the surrounding area has a particularly rich historic environment including registered Historic Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Monuments. Notably there are three Conservation Areas within/ or in close proximity to the town centre (all of which include numerous Listed Buildings). High levels of growth in this location (Option 3 and Option 1) therefore has the potential to lead to long term adverse effects on the local historic environment. It is noted however that the redevelopment of brownfield sites has good potential for positive townscape improvements. In this context, where proposals seek to deliver good, high quality design and appropriate layout, this may lead to landscape/ townscape improvements and positive effects such as increased awareness and access. This however is uncertain at this stage.</p> <p>The delivery of the Yeovil SUEs are likely to lead to significant negative effects on the historic environment given their size and scale. Notably the Southern SUE is located near to the Registered Barwick Park and adjacent to the Scheduled Monument and archaeological site 'Roman village North of Dunnock's Lane. Large-scale development in this area is likely to affect the historic landscape setting to some degree and is likely to require archaeological investigation prior to any development. However, as the delivery of the SUEs are constant under all options, they cannot be differentiated between in this respect.</p> <p>All settlements are constrained to some extent by heritage assets, with Conservation Areas present at all higher order settlements and many lower. Notably, all Primary Market Towns contain substantially sized Conservation Areas, covering almost the entirety of the town centres and extending through the built up area in many cases. For example, within Crewkerne the majority of the town centre is covered by Conservation Area status and includes over 140 Listed Buildings. All options therefore have the potential to adversely impact upon the setting of designated assets at these settlements, with the potential for long term negative effects. Option 3 and Option 1 perform less well in this respect given the higher level of growth proposed at the Primary Market Towns.</p> <p>While directing growth to the lower order settlements (Option 4 and to a lesser extent Option 2) may reduce impacts on historic assets concentrated at larger centres, options would instead increase adverse effect on the rural settlements, impacting rural town/ villagescape and character. However, as set out under the Landscape SA theme, the local landscape and townscape character surrounding the higher tier settlements is also of low capacity to accommodate growth, with the potential for significant long term negative effects. Conversely, it is highlighted that options present opportunities for positive townscape enhancements, improving accessibility and understanding of heritage assets.</p> <p>At a district scale, Option 1 is best performing as it predominately directs growth to areas identified as having high or moderate capacity in landscape terms to accommodate development (as set out in the Peripheral Landscape Study (2008)). While there are a few exceptions to this, this only reflects the sensitivity of the districts' landscape and character as a whole, and the limited high/ moderate capacity areas to accommodate the quantum of growth required to meet the district's needs. Options 2 and 4 perform more poorly as the increased levels of growth at</p>			

	<p>lower order settlements will require development in areas of higher sensitivity, adversely impacting on the wider rural character of the district. While Option 3 directs development away from the more rural historic settlements, the increased growth at the higher order settlements will mean that growth will occur in areas that are sensitive in landscape terms and are therefore more likely to affect the setting of heritage assets at the higher order settlements. It is considered that the significance of the effect will be dependent on the exact location, design/ layout of development, as well as the implementation of mitigation measures.</p>
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